THIS THESIS EXPLORES THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PUNK AND ANARCHISM IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS OF THE UK, POLAND, AND INDONESIA FROM AN INSIDER PUNK AND ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVE. NEW PRIMARY ETHNOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORMS THE BULK OF THE RESEARCH, DRAWING ON GROUNDED THEORY METHOD AND AN ENGAGEMENT WITH ORIENTALISM. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK IS INFORMED BY THE CONCEPT OF ANTINOMY WHICH EMBRACES COMPLICATION AND CONTRADICTION – AND RATHER THAN ATTEMPT TO SMOOTH-OUT COMPLEXITIES, IMPOSE A SIMPLIFIED NARRATIVE, OR CONSTRUCT A FANCIFUL DIALECTIC, THE THESIS EXAMINES THE NUMEROUS TENSIONS THAT EMERGE IN ORDER TO CRITIQUE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PUNK AND ANARCHISM.

A KEY TENSION WHICH RUNS THROUGHOUT THE PHD IS THE DISMISSAL OF PUNK BY SOME ANARCHISTS. THIS IS OFTEN COUCHED IN TERMS OF 'LIFESTYLIST' VERSUS 'WORKERIST' ANARCHISM, WITH PUNK BEING DENIGRATED IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE FORMER. THE CASE STUDIES BRING OUT THIS TENSION, BUT ALSO SIGNIFICANTLY COMPLICATE IT, AND THE FINAL CHAPTER ANALYSES THIS ISSUE IN MORE DETAIL TO ARGUE THAT PUNK ENGAGES WITH A WIDE SPECTRUM OF ANARCHISMS, AND THAT THE 'LIFESTYLIST'/'WORKERIST' DICHOTOMY IS ANYWAY FALSE.

THE CASE STUDIES THEMSELVES FOCUS ON THEMES SUCH AS ANTI-FASCISM, FOOD SOVEREIGNTY/ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISM, POLITICISATION, FEMINISM, SQUATTING, RELIGION, AND REPRESSION. NEW EMPIRICAL INFORMATION, GARNERED THROUGH NUMEROUS INTERVIEWS AND EXTENSIVE PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION IN THE UK, POLAND, AND INDONESIA, INFORMS THE THICK DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE STUDY CONTEXTS. THE THEORY AND ANALYSIS EMERGE FROM THIS DATA, AND THE VOICE OF THE PUNKS THEMSELVES IS GIVEN PRIMACY HERE.

PUNK AND ANARCHISM: UK, POLAND, INDONESIA

JIM DONAGHEY

PHD
2016

PUNK AND ANARCHISM:
UK, POLAND, INDONESIA

JIM DONAGHEY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) AT
LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY
APRIL 2016

Punk and Anarchism. UK, Poland, Indonesia.

by

Jim Donaghey

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at Loughborough University

April 2016

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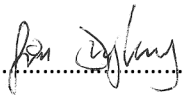
Author's signature.....  .....Date..25/07/2016.....

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relationships between punk and anarchism in the contemporary contexts of the UK, Poland, and Indonesia from an insider punk and anarchist perspective. New primary ethnographic information forms the bulk of the research, drawing on Grounded Theory Method and an engagement with Orientalism. The theoretical framework is informed by the concept of antinomy which embraces complication and contradiction – and rather than attempt to smooth-out complexities, impose a simplified narrative, or construct a fanciful dialectic, the thesis examines the numerous tensions that emerge in order to critique the relationships between punk and anarchism.

A key tension which runs throughout the PhD is the dismissal of punk by some anarchists. This is often couched in terms of 'lifestylist' versus 'workerist' anarchism, with punk being denigrated in association with the former. The case studies bring out this tension, but also significantly complicate it, and the final chapter analyses this issue in more detail to argue that punk engages with a wide spectrum of anarchisms, and that the 'lifestylist'/'workerist' dichotomy is anyway false.

The case studies themselves focus on themes such as anti-fascism, food sovereignty/animal rights activism, politicisation, feminism, squatting, religion, and repression. New empirical information, garnered through numerous interviews and extensive participant observation in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, informs the thick description of the case study contexts. The theory and analysis emerge from this data, and the voice of the punks themselves is given primacy here.

KEYWORDS

Punk, anarchism, UK, Poland, Indonesia, DIY, anarcha-feminism, squatting, anti-fascism, animal rights

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you, dziękuję, and terima kasih to all the interviewees whose words, thoughts, opinions and insights helped form this thesis. Special thanks to all those who showed me such kind hospitality on my travels around the UK, Poland and Indonesia – extra special mention to Dolly, Lukas, Richard, Seamus, Gosia, Piotrek, Kunx, Gary, Ania, Charlie, Teuku, Kamil, and Goty.

I am eternally indebted to the most adept PhD supervisor imaginable, Ruth Kinna – thank you for all your expert guidance and support. Thanks also to the whole community at Loughborough University's Department of Politics, Philosophy and International Relations, especially Dave Berry, Uri Gordon, Alex Christoyannopoulos, Marcus Collins, Chris Szejnmann, Pauline Dainty, everyone at the Anarchist Research Group, and all fellow PhD candidates. Forza Egaleco!

To the punks and anarcho-types of Leicester (and *even* the wider Shire): Marcus, Sham, and Kirsty of Die Wrecked (I hope you had as much fun as I did over our short but illustrious 'career'); the Leicester DIY scene; the master parsnip chefs of Food Not Bombs Leicester; Leicester Solidarity Group; assorted anti-fascists; Leicester People's University; thanks for keeping me firmly grounded, usefully busy, and (more-or-less) sane.

Thanks to Paul Michael for some final proof-reading, and to Jamie Donnelly for the drawing on the cover of a punk enjoying some Bakunin Brand Vodka. And thanks to comrades in Bandung and Warsaw for the translation work.

All my love and deepest gratitude to my partner Amy – your support has been invaluable. And to our new daughter Saoirse – stay free kid! Don't let the bastards grind you down.

UP THE PUNX!

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This thesis examines the relationships between anarchism and punk in the contemporary[1] contexts of the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, constructing analyses which are grounded in the lived experience of scene[2] participants, through the use of interview and participant observation techniques.

Ostensibly, this thesis follows the formal academic structure demanded for an introductory chapter of a PhD submission – there will be the familiar literature review, theoretical framework, and methodology. However, as someone who remains closely involved in the anarchist movement and punk scene, I am conscious of the potentially exploitative aspects of 'scientific' inquiry into social groups which often view the attentions of 'the academy' as intrusive. As such, it is important to build an anarchist-informed approach which is reflexive, sensitive, democratic, and non-exploitative, but which is at the same time rigorous, analytical, and critical. This thesis will *say something* and make a contribution academically, but not at the expense of the people, scenes and movements discussed here, and not for commercial gain. As an insider account of the relationships between anarchism and punk, the theoretical framework and methodology *must fit* with an anarchist and punk perspective.

This thesis addresses three distinct audiences (though if you do not find yourself represented here, please read on regardless). Firstly, to those in the anarchist movement who reject punk: it will be demonstrated that the relationships between punk and anarchism run deeply, and while critically exploring their complications and limitations, it is argued that these relationships should not be dismissed offhandedly. Secondly, to people who want to know more about punk from an academic perspective, but are confronted with overly simplistic and misleading literature: an empirically grounded 'insider' account of punk and its core political association, anarchism, is offered as contribution to new primary research material and critical analysis to this area of study. Thirdly, to punks (and also anarchists) who are deeply suspicious about academic inquiry into their scenes,

[1] Research fieldwork was carried-out between late 2012 and early 2015.

[2] The term 'scene' is used in a loose and flexible way throughout this thesis, used in reference to 'the global punk scene' as well as to smaller geographic areas (typically nation-states) e.g. the UK scene, and city-specific scenes e.g. 'the Bandung scene,' but also to refer to particular strands and sub-genres within punk, e.g. 'the straight-edge scene' or 'the queer-punk scene.' Other research into punk has utilised Pierre Bourdieu's concept of Habitus to explain punk scenes (see Alan O'Connor: 'Punk and Globalization: Spain and Mexico,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, (2004), pp. 175-195; 'Local scenes and dangerous crossroads: punk and theories of cultural hybridity,' *Popular Music*, vol. 21, no. 2, (2002), pp. 225-236. And Alastair Gordon, *The Authentic Punk: An Ethnography of DiY Music Ethics*, PhD thesis, Loughborough University, (January 2005)), but with such a flexible use of the term 'scene' this concept is insufficient for the present research, and an understanding of its use is better gleaned from context.

culture and movement: I do not seek to exploit the punk scene – punk has, since its earliest roots, engaged in critical self-reflection through zines and lyrics. This thesis contributes to punk's ongoing dialogue of *self*-analysis and critique, and represents punk from the perspective of punks themselves. By a punk, for the punks!

Audience one – Anti-punk Anarchists (and the research spark)

The original impetus for this inquiry into the relationships between anarchism and punk was sparked nearly ten years ago while attending a meeting of the Queen's University Belfast Anarchist and Libertarian Communist Student Society (what they lacked in a catchy moniker was made up for in interesting discussions). One meeting turned to discuss punk. My previously held assumption that punk and anarchism went happily hand-in-hand was shaken to the ground when a comrade dismissed punk's relationship with anarchism as distracting and harmful. This hostile attitude was new to me, and surprising because of its source. The comrade in question was a member of an anarcho-syndicalist group and described his politics as libertarian communism, but like myself, he had been exposed to anarchism through punk – he had even played in straight-edge hardcore bands and volunteered with the local anarchist punk collective. His political development had been fundamentally shaped by punk, but it was apparent that he felt his current political perspective meant he had to jettison any association with punk entirely, and he did so in no uncertain terms. This was confusing, and though I was ill-equipped to make sense of or interrogate this rejection of punk at the time, this lingering confusion has generated the tension which drives the research and analysis here. What *are* the relationships between anarchism and punk? Why do some anarchists reject punk? Were my assumptions, drawn from my own lived experience, wrong? Or just a bit simplistic? The relationships between punk and anarchism are explicated at length here – but they are complicated and the tensions around these relationships speak to wider issues about approaches to anarchism and the relationship between politics and culture.

Audience two – Academic Contribution (literature review and theoretical framework)

Reading the academic literature around punk, there was a repeated sense of frustration on encountering flawed accounts being presented as definitive fact – and these simplistic and ill-founded analyses were being picked-up and regurgitated uncritically over and over again in subsequent works. In recent years there have been significant shifts in academic approaches to

punk, but the research that was (and often continues to be) vaunted as 'seminal' did not reflect my own experience of punk *at all*. The academic sources which stand-out as engaging with and understanding punk are most often written by people from *within* the punk community – they are insider accounts. And those which uncritically peddle hackneyed generalisations and fail to reflect the lived experience of punk are produced by 'outsiders.' By way of a literature review, some key works will be picked-out and evaluated, to help describe a generally positive development in the academia around punk, from outsider, mainstream media-informed misreadings of punk, to an increasing preponderance of critically engaged and nuanced insider analyses. This will turn to a particular discussion of several unconvincing attempts to analyse punk in terms of Hegelian (and especially Marxist-Hegelian) dialectics. The simplistic/generalised approach and the dialectical approach are both countered by the concept of antinomy, which is put forward here as the theoretical framework underpinning this thesis, especially as deployed in the political philosophy of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and the anarchists who followed in his wake.

- **Literature review**

Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: the meaning of style*[3] can be identified as the first serious academic engagement with punk,[4] and it has been *highly* influential – since first publication in 1979, it has been republished more than twenty times,[5] is widely cited,[6] and is a mainstay of university reading lists in sociology and culture studies. However, Hebdige's theoretical approach and methodology are seriously flawed, and it is informative to compare this with subsequent academic dealings with punk, and indeed to contrast it sharply with the theoretical approach and methodology of this thesis. Some close attention will be given to Hebdige's *Subculture* here and further below, but a more general (roughly) chronological overview of the literature will be sufficient to mark important developments in punk academia, highlight the gaps in academic knowledge this thesis seeks to fill, and to place the approach used here within that wider area of study.

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[3] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: the meaning of style*, (London: Routledge, 1979)

[4] Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons, *The Boy Who Looked at Johnny*, (London: Pluto Press, 1978) predates *Subculture* but is overly infected with the disillusionment of its authors and ends up as an acerbic polemical rant rather than a meaningful analysis.

[5] 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002 (twice), 2003, 2004, 2005 (twice), 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013 (thrice), and republication in ebook format.

[6] To use some basic impact metrics, Google Books identifies around 909 books that cite the original 1979 publication of Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: the meaning of style*, not to mention subsequent editions: http://books.google.co.uk/books?q=cites:ISBN0415039495&id=RvgdwMj4j1wC&source=gbs_citations_module_r&cad=7, while Google Scholar brings up 8286 article citation results: http://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?q=cites%3A+Dick+Hebdige+Subculture+the+meaning+of+style&btnG=&hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5. The influence of Hebdige's *Subculture* is clearly huge.

Hebdige expressly rejects research which actually engages with its subject(s). As he argues:

> Participant observation … suffers from a number of significant flaws … the absence of any analytical or explanatory framework has guaranteed such work a marginal status in the predominantly positivist tradition of mainstream sociology … the significance of class and power relations is consistently neglected or at least underestimated … for all the authenticity and close detail which participant observation made possible … the method needed to be supplemented by other more analytical procedures.[7]

Hebdige's supplanting method, then, is Barthesian semiotics, through which he identifies elements of 'the' punk aesthetic (as detailed by the tabloid press in the UK) and extrapolates an orthodox Marxist analysis from them. Hebdige *intentionally* refused to speak to any punks, or attend any gigs or other punk gatherings. In this lack of an actual engagement with punk participants, Hebdige makes some basic factual errors,[8] and is only aware of high-profile, commercially successful groups which featured in the mainstream press of the time. His reliance on a heavily mediated representation of punk means he remains totally ignorant of the majority of punk bands, fans, participants, zines etc. that existed with little or no mainstream coverage. The fundamental failure of this severely skewed representation is recognised by David Muggleton: 'Dick Hebdige's book … had absolutely nothing to say about my life as I had once experienced it.'[9] The Licks (later known as The Epileptics and Flux Of Pink Indians) released a song titled 'System Rejects' in the same year that *Subculture* was published. They complain about the treatment of punk by the mainstream media, especially the tabloids, but their criticism is easily applied to Hebdige's work as well:

> They wonder why we do it
> But they don't ask to our face.
> *So they make up all their own ideas* and call us an unwanted race.
>
> The Licks, 'System Rejects'[10]

[7] Hebdige, *Subculture*, pp. 75, 76

[8] He overstates the influence of the (non-)band London SS, who never actually played a gig, writing that they 'had prepared the way for punk throughout 1975' (Hebdige, *Subculture*, p. 25, footnote). Hebdige also erroneously attributes the now classic DIY diagram of three chord-shapes along with the text, 'this is a chord, this is another, this a third, now form a band' to *Sniffin' Glue* zine, whereas it was actually from the contemporaneous zine *Sideburns*, and he even misquotes the text! See: Stephen Duncombe, *Notes From Underground: zines and the politics of alternative culture*,' (Portland, Oregon: Microcosm Publishing, 2008)

[9] David Muggleton, *Inside Subculture. The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, (London: Berg, 2000), p. 2

[10] [emphasis added]. The band were called The Licks when 'System Rejects' was first released (Stortbeat Records, 1979), but re-released the same version as The Epileptics in 1980 (Spiderleg Rcords) and 1981 (Stortbeat Records), as well as re-recording the whole EP with Penny Rimbaud of Crass on drums (Spiderleg Records, 1981) after the successful release of Flux Of Pink Indians' *Neu Smell*, (Crass Records, 1981).

Hebdige simply *uses* punk to bolster his own political beliefs and preferred social science method. In Hebdige's own words: '[i]t is perhaps appropriate that the punks … should *be used* to test some of the methods for "reading" signs,'[11] or as Muggleton puts it: 'the book *appropriated* its subject-matter.'[12] Hebdige was part of the Birmingham CCCS[13] generation of Marxist academics, and as such it is unsurprising that his semiotic research leads him to an orthodox Marxist analysis of punk as an inarticulate expression of alienation by the lumpenproletariat. There *are* some insightful contributions though, for example Hebdige presents a relatively subtle treatment of the attempts to defuse punk by incorporating it into the mainstream, which astutely identifies the sell-outs of popular punk bands and the exposés of the press as undermining the movement and its claims to authenticity. Hebdige also toys with a Marxist deployment of Hegelian dialectics, but has difficulty in making a coherent analysis of punk in those terms – as will be discussed in more detail below. However, Hebdige's analysis is ultimately fruitless, as Alan O'Connor notes: 'Hebdige's model just doesn't work,'[14] and 'now seems very dated,'[15] while Mark Gottdiener concludes that Hebdige 'fails in explaining the meaning of punk.'[16]

Hebdige is to be commended for taking punk seriously in an academic context, but his analysis fails because of its patronising refusal to actually engage with punks. Because he places himself in the role of an 'expert semiotician' he is enabled to read his own biases onto punk and extrapolate analyses which lack any grounding in the lived experience of punk, and he is *openly exploitative*. Yet, as mentioned above, *Subculture* remains a hugely influential text, and the academic (and wider) understanding of punk is negatively impacted as a result.

Subsequent academic dealings with punk generally improve on Hebdige's early work. For example Dave Laing's *One Chord Wonders: Power and meaning in punk rock* (1985)[17] makes a meaningful contribution in its analysis of punk's impact on the music industry, especially in terms of DIY ethics and demystification of production processes. Laing repeats several of Hebdige's over-generalised assumptions, especially in terms of 'the' punk aesthetic, but he usefully acknowledges punk as 'an

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Overground Records also later released a compilation of all The Epileptics material, titled *System Rejects* (1996).

[11] Hebdige, *Subculture*, p. 19, [emphasis added]

[12] Muggleton, *Inside Subculture*, p. 1

[13] Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, based at the University of Birmingham from 1964-2002.

[14] Alan O'Connor interviewed by Michael Siciliano, 'Maximumsocialscience: an interview/conversation with Alan O'Connor,' in *Punkademics: The basement show in the ivory tower*, Zack Furness (ed.), (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2012), p. 95

[15] Alan O'Connor interviewed by Michael Siciliano, 'Maximumsocialscience,' in *Punkademics*, p. 96

[16] Mark Gottdiener, *Postmodern Semiotics: material culture and the forms of postmodern life*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 249

[17] Dave Laing, *One Chord Wonders: Power and meaning in punk rock*, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985)

extremely heterogeneous cultural movement,'[18] 'shot through with paradox at every level.'[19] By contrast, a particularly poor effort is Tricia Henry's *Break All Rules! Punk rock and the making of a style* (1989),[20] which unquestioningly regurgitates sensationalist, simplistic, and superficial interpretations of punk, albeit with the addition of a few hundred pages of 'intellectual theorising.'[21] Like *Subculture*, Henry's work has been influential far beyond its merits.[22]

There have been several interesting oral histories of punk, which represent a marked improvement in approach over the 'outsider' academic accounts above. Even while these oral histories lack critical analysis, punk participants are provided with space to give account of their own scenes, rather than having their motivations assumed by academic experts. Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain's *Please Kill Me* (1996)[23] collects first-hand testimony from punk participants, but focuses very closely on the New York scene of the late-1970s, and is primarily concerned with salacious gossip. Alex Ogg's *No More Heroes* (2006)[24] and John Robb's *Punk Rock: an oral history* (2006)[25] also make good use of interview material, but are limited in their scope, and retrench the focus on commercial bands of the late 1970s in the UK. Four of the most valuable oral histories of punk are by Ian Glasper (*Burning Britain* (2004),[26] *The Day the Country Died* (2006),[27] *Trapped in a Scene* (2009),[28] *Armed with Anger* (2012)[29]). These books detail the UK punk scenes of the 1980s and 1990s, and while taking a similar approach to the other oral histories mentioned here in terms of presenting the oral testimony of

[18] Laing, *One Chord Wonders*, p. 128
[19] Ibid. p. 131
[20] Tricia Henry, *Break All Rules! Punk Rock and the Making of a Style*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1989)
[21] In addition to these early academic attempts to examine punk, there are numerous 'popular histories' of punk written by music journalists such as: Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces: a secret history of the twentieth century*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989); Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and punk rock*, (London: Faber, 1991); Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and Start Again: Post-punk 1978-84*, (London: Faber & Faber, 2005); Clinton Heylin, *Babylon's Burning: from punk to grunge*, (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2007); and the 'Punk' chapters in Barry Miles' *London Calling: A countercultural history of London since 1945*, (London: Atlantic Books Ltd., 2010) and *In The Seventies: adventures in the counter-culture*, (London: Profile Books, 2011). These texts include some interesting anecdotes and perspectives, but while the journalistic approach often makes for an entertaining read, these are not works of rigorous research, and as 'outsider' accounts the insightfulness of their analysis is limited.
[22] For example, 84 citations are listed at https://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?cites=2309791274127302486&as_sdt=2005&sciodt=0,5&hl=en [accessed 26th February 2016]
[23] Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain, *Please Kill Me. The uncensored oral history of punk*, (London: Penguin Books, 1996)
[24] Alex Ogg, *No More Heroes: a complete history of UK punk from 1976 to 1980*, (London: Cherry Red, 2006)
[25] John Robb, *Punk Rock: an oral history*, (London: Ebury Press, 2006 [and Oakland: PM Press, 2012])
[26] Ian Glasper, Burning Britain: the history of UK punk 1980-1984, (London: Cherry Red, 2004 [and Oakland: PM Press, 2014])
[27] Ian Glasper, *The Day the Country Died. A history of anarcho-punk 1980-1984*, (London: Cherry Red, 2006 [and Oakland: PM Press, 2014])
[28] Ian Glasper, *Trapped in a Scene: UK Hardcore 1985-1989*, (London, Cherry Red, 2009)
[29] Ian Glasper, *Armed With Anger. How UK punk survived the nineties*, (London: Cherry Red, 2012)

punk participants without much analysis, Glasper details punk scenes that are frequently overlooked or even actively excluded.

Glasper's collections of punk testimony are valuable because they step outside of the narrow 'orthodox' interpretation of punk, especially countering the notion of a supposedly discrete 'punk era' of the late-1970s. Within the other oral histories mentioned above this periodisation is clearly evident. McNeil and McCain lavish attention on the mid-to-late-1970s, but cover the entire period of 1980-1992 as a mere epilogue,[30] while Robb gives each year between 1976-1979 an individual chapter, or even several chapters, while 1980-1984 is lumped into one chapter, and he goes no further.[31] Ogg's subtitle is *a complete history of UK punk from 1976 to 1980* and commercial bands are given the majority of coverage.[32] Claims to being definitive or 'complete' are strongly refuted here, but this pervasive narrow focus on the late-1970s reflects the mainstream media's attention span for punk, with the added romance of regime change in the UK in 1979 and the US in 1981 – and an Orwellian note for those that go as far as 1984. To illustrate this flurry of commercial interest, the *total* coverage of punk in the mainstream music magazines *Zig Zag, NME*, *Melody Maker*, *Trouser Press,* and *Sounds* was:

1976[33] – 22 articles;
1977 – 77 articles;
1978 – 88 articles;
1979 – 39 articles;
1980 – 22 articles;
1981 – 3 articles.[34]

As commercial interest waned, the mainstream media's gaze was turned to the profit-potential of 'New Wave' and punk was declared 'dead.'[35] Barry Miles goes as far as to say that the 'commodification of punk … had taken about *nine months* from start to finish.'[36] This concrete end-

[30] McNeil and McCain, *Please Kill Me*, p. 373
[31] Even Glasper's four books reflect some of this historical skewing, with two volumes dedicated to 1980-1984, one to 1985-1989, and one to cover the entire decade of the 1990s.
[32] The Clash – 21 pages, Sex Pistols - 15.5 pages, the Buzzcocks - 14 pages, the Damned - 21 pages, the Jam - 12 pages, Sham 69 - 10 pages, Siouxsie & the Banshees - 17 pages, Stiff Little Fingers – 10.5 pages, the Stranglers - 17 pages, UK Subs – 14.5 pages. And London SS, who never played a gig but had members who went on to join commercially successful punk bands, are given three pages compared to just two pages for bands such as the Epileptics. Many bands do not feature *at all*.
[33] Prior to 1976 some of these publications make use of the word 'punk' but as an adjective to describe a raw rock 'n' roll sound, rather than a specific punk genre, scene or movement.
[34] Articles accessed at: www.rocksbackpages.com [accessed 10th February 2016]
[35] Even as early as February 1978, 'the show business columnists of the London evening paper, *The Standard*, announced that "Punk Is Dead".' (Laing, *One Chord Wonders*, p. 106)
[36] Miles, *London Calling*, p. 371, [emphasis added]

point of punk often shifts according to the author's personal involvement in punk, as typified by Legs McNeil, who writes: 'after the Sex Pistols tour, I had no interest in doing *Punk* magazine … I was replaced. But I didn't care. It was over.'[37] The death of punk is often a purely subjective experience, but is almost always presented as general and definitive.

Punk's 'death' crops-up in academic accounts as well. For example: Robert Garnett suggests that '[t]he moment of punk passed … because the space in which it operated was closed down,'[38] and argues that 'punk could never be repeated. Its historical space disappeared';[39] Laing writes that 'punk rock's moment of triumph was brief';[40] and Suzanne Moore argues that 'punk is dead except in some theme-park way.'[41] These ideas of punk as an ephemeral 'moment' or a time-limited phenomenon are based on the commercialisation of punk as a sub-culture – an interpretation which stems directly from Hebdige's argument that this is an inevitable outcome for all sub-cultures. Hebdige's analysis is repeated by David Huxley: 'Images associated with the subculture are re-used and made safe by society … the much vilified safety-pin soon appears in designer dresses by Zandra Rhodes,'[42] and also by Andy Medhurst who argues that punk's visual signifiers were successfully co-opted.[43] Even Russ Bestley, who usefully argues against a narrow London-centric perspective on punk, considers '[t]he punk movement between 1976 and 1984' as a 'distinct period.'[44]

This thesis explores the *contemporary* punk scenes of the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, so of course the notion that 'punk is dead' is completely refuted here. To quote the text from a 1982 punk flyer: 'If punk is dead, what the hell is this?'[45] The historical focus described above is, thankfully, not ubiquitous in academic accounts of punk. Stephen Duncombe criticises that myopic tendency:

> [I]t's too easy for academics to say 'this is what punk was' when they're looking at a particular moment of clarity [late 1970s] … when the political lines have been drawn …

[37] Legs McNeil interviewed in McNeil and McCain, *Please Kill Me*, p. 334
[38] Robert Garnett, 'Too low to be low: Art pop and the Sex Pistols,' in *Punk Rock: So What? The Cultural Legacy of Punk*, Roger Sabin (ed.), (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 17
[39] Garnett, 'Too low to be low,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 27
[40] Laing, *One Chord Wonders*, p. 131
[41] Suzanne Moore, 'Is that all there is?' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 235
[42] David Huxley, '"Ever get the feeling you've been cheated?": Anarchy and control in *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 95
[43] Andy Medhurst, 'What did I get? Punk, memory and autobiography,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 225
[44] Russ Bestley, 'From "London's Burning" to "Sten Guns in Sunderland",' *Punk and Post-Punk*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January 2012), p. 41
[45] From a flyer announcing *MaximumRockNRoll* radio show on WFMU, New Jersey 1982 in Steven Blush, *American Hardcore: A Tribal History*, (Port Townsend, Washington: Feral House, 2010), p. 327

> You know what? That's a blip … You have to look at the long-term: what happened in the 1990s and 2000s, which was (and is) *equally as important*.[46]

And, to take Duncombe's point further, it is important to explore *contemporary* punk scenes as well. Brian Cogan describes punk 'as a virus – self-replicating and mutating below the surface, only to unexpectedly reappear,' as a way to understand 'why punk rock has had so many obituaries but continues to flourish.'[47]

Against the 'punk is dead' orthodoxy, Glasper writes that the end of the 1970s 'was a time when punk stopped being merely a radical fashion statement, and became a force for real social change; a *genuine revolutionary movement*.'[48] Subsequent waves of punk took the early scenes' key impetuses and energies and distilled them, reflecting upon, expanding upon and improving them. This was expressed aesthetically – even while 'the media declared punk dead and buried, a whole new breed of band was emerging from the gutter. Harder and faster than their '76-'77 predecessors.'[49] Or as Karl Morris of Xtract puts it: 'If the first-wave of punk was a breath of fresh air then the second wave was like a kick in the balls.'[50] And, of greater significance to this thesis, this intensification was also reflected *politically*, as Cogan notes: 'the reason punk has survived is not just the gaudy clothing, but the truly radical impulses embedded in the music.'[51] Craig O'Hara writes that subsequent punk scenes were 'visibly politically oriented … bands such as Crass, Conflict, and Discharge in the UK, The Ex and BGK in Holland, and MDC and Dead Kennedys in America, changed many Punks into rebellious thinkers rather than just Rock 'n' Rollers.'[52] Holtzman, Hughes, and Van Meter agree:

> punk's 'death' brought new life to the counterculture … [T]hese fledgling scenes placed as their central focus the oft-repeated but rarely followed commitment of earlier punk bands: capitalist influence was not only unnecessary but unwelcome. With this view, punks began to create their own networks of musical and cultural production …

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[46] Stephen Duncombe interviewed by Roger Sabin, 'Interview with Stephen Duncombe and Maxwell Tremblay, editors of *White Riot: Punk Rock and Politics of Race,' Punk and Post-Punk*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January 2012), p. 109, [emphasis added]

[47] Brian Cogan, '"Do They Owe Us a Living? Of Course They Do!" Crass, Throbbing Gristle, and Anarchy and Radicalism in Early English Punk Rock,' *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, vol. 1, no. 2, (2007), p. 79

[48] Glasper, *The Day the Country Died*, back cover, [emphasis added]

[49] Glasper, *Burning Britain*, back cover

[50] Karl Morris of Xtract quoted in Glasper, *Burning Britain*, p. 10

[51] Cogan, '"Do They Owe Us a Living?"' *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, p. 87

[52] Craig O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk: More than noise!* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1999), p. 71

> developing substantive ways of abandoning capitalist institutions and building alternative networks and communities.[53]

So, contrary to the tired assertion that punk ceased-to-be as the 1970s ended, punk in fact became a more politically explicit movement than the first-wave had been, even while it diversified and split into numerous sub-genres and scenes. Sabin points out that the 'punk tradition … is *still thriving today*.'[54] This thesis adds to the understanding of that continuing tradition and its relationships to anarchism in contemporary contexts.

There are a number of academic accounts of punk which successfully avoid the stereotypical, mainstream media-driven, myopic and linear narratives described above. Almost all of these are written by punk insiders.[55] For example, Craig O'Hara's *The Philosophy of Punk* (1995)[56] presents an insider's view of punk, and while it is largely focussed on the US and often lacking in academic rigour (for example, Henry's *Break All Rules!* is referenced uncritically at least once), the high level of personal engagement and extensive use of zine material makes O'Hara's book a sound introduction to the main themes and issues within punk. Lauraine LeBlanc's *Pretty in Punk* (1999)[57] is another strong insider academic account of punk, and takes the often overlooked issue of sexism within punk to task, and is referenced frequently in the case study focus on feminism and sexism here (Chapter 3). Roger Sabin's edited collection *Punk Rock: So What?* (1999)[58] is a mixed-bag, and while some of the contributions retread the 'orthodox' analysis of punk, the volume at least benefits from bringing differing perspectives together, and Sabin's own chapter usefully, if controversially, challenges the

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[53] Ben Holtzman, Craig Hughes, and Kevin Van Meter, 'Do it Yourself … and the Movement Beyond Capitalism' in *Constituent Imagination: Militant Investigations//Collective Theorization*, Erika Biddle, Stevphen Shukaitis, and David Graeber (eds.), (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2007), p. 47, (endnote: 'It is important to note that punk is not the only way to trace the development of DIY. During the late 1970s, a similar movement was developing in black ghettos in the form of hip hop. It is also certainly true that there are many historical examples of groups who had understandings similar to those described in this paper: the Industrial Workers of the World, numerous radical feminist groups of the 1960s and 1970s, the Black Panthers, etc. However, it was not until punk in the late 1970s that DIY explicitly developed as a term and as a practice.')

[54] Roger Sabin, 'Introduction,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 4, [emphasis added on last three words, other emphasis in original]

[55] Some non-academic auto-biographical accounts that are of note include: Penny Rimbaud, *Shibboleth: my revolting life*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1998); Henry Rollins, *Get in the Van*, (Los Angeles: 2.13.61, 1996); Steve Ignorant, *The Rest is Propaganda*, (Palling: Dimlo Productions, 2014); Alice Bag, *Violence Girl: East L.A. Rage to Hollywood Stage, a Chicana Punk Story*, (Port Townsend, Washington: Feral House, 2011); John Lydon (with Keith Zimmerman), *Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs: The Authorised Autobiography, Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1994).

[56] Craig O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk: More than noise!* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1999) – this is actually a second edition of the book, but the 1995 first edition is not widely available, so the 1999 AK Press edition will be the cited version here.

[57] Lauraine Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk. Girls' gender resistance in a boys' subculture*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999)

[58] Roger Sabin (ed.), *Punk Rock: So What? The Cultural Legacy of Punk*, (London: Routledge, 1999)

accepted dictum on punk's relationship to race and racism. David Muggleton's *Inside Subculture. The Postmodern Meaning of Style* (2000),[59] as already mentioned above, explicitly critiques Hebdige's approach. Muggleton usefully highlights the problem of 'analysts imposing their own conceptual reality (and political world-view) upon the subjects of the study'[60] – but ends-up imposing his own political bias onto his interviewees, by interpreting their responses as liberal-individualism, even when they explicitly report otherwise. For example, one of his interviewees 'Dan' said, 'I'm a personal *anarchist*,' but this is interpreted as 'a heightened expression of the dominant Western ideology of *liberalism*.'[61] It is also notable that Muggleton's questionnaire/structured interview guide focuses almost entirely on aesthetics, and despite the very limited engagement with class issues (a few questions about employment) this is presented as the basis on which to dismiss any sense of class consciousness in punk whatsoever. These criticisms aside, the insider perspective and engaged methodology of Muggleton's analysis means that the account remains sensitive and nuanced for the most-part. Alan O'Connor's *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy* (2008)[62] deals with the material concerns of punk production, and does so usefully. O'Connor has also produced some insightful insider descriptions and analyses of punk in Canada, the US, Mexico and Spain.[63] One outsider account that has *some* merit is Stacy Thompson's *Punk Productions* (2004),[64] which deals with similar subject material to O'Connor's *Punk Records Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*. But Thompson's analysis must be treated with caution, because, like Hebdige's outsider account, he attempts to paint a Marxist analysis onto punk through Marxist-Hegelian dialectics, which will be discussed in more detail below.

So, from Hebdige's early attempt to understand punk there has been a general, if uneven, improvement in the quality of academic accounts over the intervening forty years or so. However, the last five years have seen some of the most positive developments in punk academia – exemplified by the founding of the Punk Scholars Network by Alastair Gordon[65] and Mike Dines[66] in

[59] David Muggleton, *Inside Subculture. The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, (London: Berg, 2000)
[60] Ibid. p. 167
[61] Ibid. p. 150, [emphasis added]
[62] Alan O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy: the emergence of DIY*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008)
[63] Alan O'Connor, 'Punk and Globalization: Spain and Mexico,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, (2004), pp. 175-195; 'Anarcho-Punk: Local scenes and international networks,' *Anarchist Studies*, vol. 11, no. 2, (2003), pp. 111-21; 'Punk and Globalization: Mexico City and Toronto,' in *Communities Across Borders: New Immigrants and Transnational Cultures,* Paul Kennedy & Victor Roudometof (eds.), (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 143-155
[64] Stacy Thompson, *Punk Productions. Unfinished business*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004)
[65] See: Alastair Gordon, *The Authentic Punk: An Ethnography of DiY Music Ethics*, PhD thesis, Loughborough University, (January 2005); 'Subcultural entrance practices in UK Punk culture, 1976–2001,' *Subcultures, Popular Music and Social Change*, (2014), pp. 155-173; 'Distinctions of Authenticity and the everyday punk

2012, the publication of *Punk & Post-Punk* journal under the editorship of Alex Ogg, Phil Kiszely, and now Russ Bestley,[67] also from 2012 and now in its fourth volume, and the annual international punk academic conference Keep It Simple, Make It Fast![68] inaugurated in Porto in 2014.

In addition to those mentioned above, some of the most exciting academic work on punk (in the English language) of recent years has come from the likes of Matt Worley,[69] Kirsty Lohman,[70] Francis Stewart,[71] Matt Grimes,[72] Rich Cross,[73] and Kevin Dunn.[74] Of especial interest to the case studies in this PhD are academic explorations into the punk and anarchist scenes in Poland by Grzegorz

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self,' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 3, no. 3, (2014), pp. 183-202; 'Pay no more than 45 copies: The collection legacy of the Crass Record, Reality Asylum (1979),' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 4, no. 1, (2015), pp. 7-27

[66] See: Michael Dines, *An investigation into the emergence of the anarcho-punk scene of the 1980s*, PhD thesis, University of Salford, (2004); 'Learning through Resistance: Contextualisation, Creation and Incorporation of a "Punk Pedagogy",' *Journal of Pedagogic Development*, vol. 5, no. 3, (2015), pp. 20-31

[67] See: Russ Bestley, 'Art Attacks & Killing Jokes: The Graphic Language of Punk Humour,' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 2, no. 3, (2014), pp. 231-267; '"I Tried to Make Him Laugh, He Didn't Get the Joke…" – Taking Punk Humour Seriously,' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 2, no. 2, (2013), pp. 119-145; 'From "London's Burning" to "Sten Guns in Sunderland",' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 1, no. 1, (2012), pp. 41-71; and *Hitsville UK: Punk rock and graphic design in the faraway towns, 1976-84*, PhD thesis, University of the Arts London, (2007)

[68] https://kismif.eventqualia.net/en/2015/home/ [accessed 11th March 2016]

[69] See: Matt Worley, 'Riotous assembly: British punk's diaspora in the summer of '81,' in *A European Youth Revolt: European Perspectives on Youth Protest and Social Movements in the 1980s*, Knud Andresen and Bart van der Steen (eds.), (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 217-227; 'Punk, Politics and British (fan)zines, 1974-84: "While the world was dying, did you wonder why?"' *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 79, no. 1, (2015), pp. 76-106; '"Hey little rich boy, take a good look at me": punk, class and British oi!' *Punk and Post-Punk*, vol. 3, no. 1, (2014), pp. 5-20; 'Shot by both sides: Punk, politics and the end of "Consensus",' *Contemporary British History*, vol. 26, no. 3, (2012), pp. 333-354; 'One nation under the bomb: the Cold War and British punk to 1984,' *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, vol. 5, no. 2, (2011), pp. 65-84

[70] See: Kirsty Lohman, 'Dutch Punk with Eastern Connections: Mapping cultural flows between East and West Europe', *Punk and Post-Punk*, vol. 2, no. 2, (2013), pp. 147-163; and *Punk Lives: Contesting Boundaries in the Dutch Punk Scene*, PhD thesis, University of Warwick, (September 2015)

[71] See: Francis Stewart, 'The anarchist, the punk rocker and the Buddha walk into a bar(n): Dharma Punx and Rebel Dharma,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 4, no. 1, (2015), pp. 71–89; 'Beyond Krishnacore: Straight Edge punk and Implicit Religion,' *Journal of Implicit Religion*, vol. 15, no. 3, (2012), pp. 259-288; 'We Sing for Change: Straight Edge punk and Social Change,' *United Academics Journal of Social Science*, (May/June 2012), pp. 40-54; and *'Punk Rock Is My Religion': An Exploration of Straight Edge punk as a Surrogate of Religion*, PhD thesis, University of Stirling, (2011)

[72] See: Matt Grimes, 'Punk zines: "symbols of defiance" from the print to the digital age,' (with Tim Wall) in *Fight Back: Punk, Politics and* Resistance, Matt Worley (ed.), (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), pp. 287-303

[73] See: Rich Cross, '"Take the Toys from the Boys": Gender, Generation and Anarchist Intent in the Work of Poison Girls,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol 3. no. 2, (2014), pp. 117-145; '"There Is No Authority But Yourself": The Individual and the Collective in British Anarcho-Punk,' *Music and Politics*, vol. 4, no. 2, (summer 2010), pp. 1-20; 'The Hippies Now Wear Black: Crass and anarcho-punk, 1977-1984,' *Socialist History*, no. 26, (2004), pp. 25-44

[74] See: Kevin Dunn, 'Anarcho-punk and resistance in everyday life,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 1, no. 2, (2012), pp. 201-218; '"If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk": Walter Benjamin's Progressive Cultural Production and DIY Punk Record Labels,' *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, vol. 24, no. 2, (June 2012), pp. 217-237; 'Never mind the bollocks: the punk rock politics of global communication,' *Review of International Studies*, vol. 34, supplement S1, (January 2008), pp. 193-210

Piotrowski,[75] and on Indonesian punk by Sean Martin-Iverson[76] and Erik Hannerz.[77] These academics all have the benefit of reflecting critically on the approaches of preceding accounts of punk, and they engage directly with punks and punk scenes in their research, so are firmly grounded in the lived experience of scene participants. Crucially, they are all, to varying extents, *insiders*. Their interest in punk stems from their own involvement in it, and their insider perspective provides them with a high level of insight and astute critical reflection. As E. Conner writes in *MaximumRockNRoll* zine: 'It's been said a million times: *what we do is secret*.[78] Punk revels in its exclusivity, its rareness and its coded language.'[79] Being an insider is crucial in achieving meaningful analysis of punk. As the *Punk & Post-Punk* editors put it: 'knowledge of the punk phenomenon, at a pragmatic, material level, leads to more fruitful and useful research outcomes than disconnected theoretical discussion.'[80] However, this role as an insider is combined with that of an academic researcher, and opens up punk's 'exclusivity, rareness, and coded language' to a wider, and perhaps unwelcome, audience. Being a punk insider brings a vitally engaged perspective – but it also risks the exploitation of our own scenes for the benefit of 'the academy.' This crucial issue will be discussed in more detail, below.

- **Against dialectics**

Dialectical analyses crop-up surprisingly often in academic accounts of punk. In addition to Hebdige and Thomspon, mentioned above, there is also Steven Taylor's *False Prophet*,[81] articles by Sean

[75] See: Grzegorz Piotrowski, 'Punk Against Communism – revolting in 1980s Poland,' in *A European Youth Revolt*, pp. 203-216; and also several insightful publications relating to anarchism and squatting: http://sh.academia.edu/GrzegorzPiotrowski [accessed 26th February 2016]

[76] See: Sean Martin-Iverson, 'Bandung Lautan Hardcore: territorialisation and deterritorialisation in an Indonesian hardcore punk scene,' *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, (2014), pp. 532-552; 'Running in Circles: Performing Values in the Bandung "Do It Yourself" Hardcore Scene,' *Ethnomusicology Forum*, vol. 23, no. 2, (2014), pp. 184-207; 'Autonomous Youth? Independence and Precariousness in the Indonesian Underground Music Scene,' *Asia Pacific journal of anthropology*, no. 13, (2012), pp. 382-397; and *The Politics of Cultural Production in the DIY Hardcore Scene in Bandung, Indonesia*, PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, (2011)

[77] See: Erik Hannerz, 'The Positioning of the Mainstream in Punk,' in *Redefining Mainstream Popular Music*, Sarah Baker, Andy Bennett and Jodie Taylor (eds.), (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 50-60; and *Performing Punk: Subcultural authentications and the positioning of the mainstream*, PhD thesis, Uppsala Universitet, (2013)

[78] Also a reference to The Germs song 'What We Do Is Secret,' from *(GI)*, (Slash Records, 1979)

[79] E. Conner, review of Joe Biel, *Beyond the Music*, *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 359, (April 2013), n.p.

[80] Philip Kiszely and Alex Ogg, 'Editorial,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 3, no. 1, (2014), p. 3. The term 'phenomenon' is problematic here, but the general appreciation of engaged, insider analysis is valid.

[81] Stephen Taylor takes a slightly different tack on the dialectical approach, saying '[m]y effort at synthesis, then, consists in the kind of post-Hegelian negativity described by Julia Kristeva … an "affirmative negativity" or "productive dissolution" of fetishism.' Steven Taylor, *False Prophet. Fieldnotes from the Punk Underground*, (Middletown Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2003), p. 80

Albiez[82] and Kieran James,[83] and an interesting (if perplexing) dialectical analysis by Stewart Home,[84] discussed below.

Throughout the first half of *Subculture*, Hebdige identifies 'contradictions' and 'antitheses' in punk. For example he writes: punk's musical and cultural mixture is 'somewhat unstable';[85] punk is faced with 'endemic contradictions, for the visions of apocalypse superficially fused in punk came from antagonistic sources';[86] 'punk music, like every other aspect of punk style, tended to develop in direct antithesis to its apparent sources.'[87] He even suggests an *irresolvable* contradiction 'between black and white cultures – a dialectic which beyond a certain point … is incapable of renewal … imprisoned within its own irreducible *antinomies*.'[88] But, despite this recognition of unresolved tensions (which is not as racist as this short excerpt suggests, incidentally), Hebdige's Marxist-Hegelianism insists that these contradicting theses and antitheses *must be resolved* by synthesis. So towards the end of *Subculture*, Hebdige shifts from presenting punk as being riven with contradiction and antinomy, to describing it as a style which was 'so thoroughly *ordered*,'[89] and a 'subculture [which] was nothing if not *consistent*.'[90] This allows Hebdige to reveal singular truths about the semiotic signifiers he identifies (safety pins, spiky hair, swastikas etc.). The complexities he identifies must first be flattened-out, before they can be fed into a dialectical reckoning. For example: the 'swearing, the references to "fat hippies", the rags, the lumpen poses'[91] were a direct response to joblessness and a dramatisation of 'Britain's decline';[92] '[t]he various stylistic ensembles adopted by the punks were undoubtedly expressive of genuine aggression, frustration and anxiety';[93] 'beneath the clownish make-up there lurked the unaccepted and disfigured face of capitalism.'[94] From these few semiotic signifiers, Hebdige *definitively* presents punk as an inevitable expression of alienated lumpen/proletariat youth in the capitalist consumer society in decline – fitting neatly, of course, with orthodox Marxist theory. However, even as Hebdige inventively formulates these conclusions, the antinomies of punk reappear. Near the end of the book, he writes

[82] Sean Albiez, 'Know history!: John Lydon, cultural capital and the prog/punk dialectic,' *Popular Music*, vol. 22, no. 3, (2003), pp. 357-374
[83] Kieran James, '"This is England": Punk rock's realist/idealist dialectic and its implications for critical accounting education,' *Science Direct: Accounting Forum*, no. 33, (2009), pp. 127-145
[84] Stewart Home, *Cranked Up Really High: genre theory and punk rock, an inside account of punk rock*, (Hove: CodeX, 1995)
[85] Hebdige, *Subculture*, p. 25
[86] Ibid. p. 27
[87] Ibid. pp. 67, 68
[88] Ibid. p. 70, [emphasis added]
[89] Ibid. p. 113, [emphasis added]
[90] Ibid. p. 114, [emphasis added]
[91] Ibid. p. 87
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid. p. 115

that '[t]he punk ensembles … did not so much magically resolve experienced contradictions as *represent the experience of contradiction itself*.'[95] It is clear that Hebdige retains a sense of punk's antinomies – he says as much on at least two occasions – even while his ideology and subsequent methodological model constantly drive him to try to synthesise these contradictions in the pursuit of an objective truth. But the dialectic just won't stick.

Another dialectical analysis of punk is provided by Stacy Thompson in *Punk Productions* (2004).[96] Like Hebdige, Thompson seeks to foist a Marxist-Hegelian dialectic onto punk, as a means of developing a Marxist interpretation of punk generally. Thompson's dialectic is most clearly represented, without irony, in anarcho-punk, which employs 'an aesthetic that draws into opposition the commercial logic of the commodity market … and [an] anticommercial vector.'[97] This tension is very apparent in DIY and anarchist-engaged punk, as will be discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis – but Thompson asserts that this 'contradiction' must be '[u]nderstood dialectically.'[98] He explains the synthesis thus: 'the oppositional aesthetics of the producers of these subgenres of punk are dialectical attempts to transcend the contradiction between economics and aesthetics in order to arrive at a new aesthetic, free from economics.'[99] But, like Hebdige, Thompson can't seem to make the dialectic stick. His synthesis *should* produce 'a form of punk that would transcend the opposition between punk and the commodity market to arrive at a new concept of punk,'[100] but, in particular reference to *Profane Existence* DIY label and zine, their 'failure pointed towards a third term *without making it material.'*[101] Thompson writes that '*[n]o new option, or third term, was proffered*,'[102] so, simply put, despite the identification of contradiction in punk there is no evidence of synthesis in dialectical terms. The tensions go *unresolved* – they are antinomies, as Hebdige grudgingly acknowledges in *Subculture* also.

One of the most interesting applications of dialectics to punk is Stewart Home's *Cranked Up Really High* (1995).[103] Home is highly entertaining in his demolishing critique of music journalists (especially Greil Marcus), his denouncement of links between Situationism and punk, and his assertion that the Sex Pistols were not actually a punk band at all. Home astutely points out: 'that it's too easy to reduce things to neat but absurdly reductive categories. Instead of attempting to

[95] Ibid. p. 121, [emphasis in original]
[96] Stacy Thompson, *Punk Productions. Unfinished business*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004)
[97] Ibid. p. 102
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid. p. 117
[100] Ibid. p. 102
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Stewart Home, *Cranked Up Really High: genre theory and punk rock, an inside account of punk rock*, (Hove: CodeX, 1995)

reduce PUNK ROCK to a series of static positions, we must grasp its movement.'[104] However, this movement, according to Home, is a highly *reductive* dialectic which unfolds in four quite absurd stages:

> The vague radicalism of groups such as the Fugs and the MC5 was transformed in England during the late seventies into a concern with class which only found its full realisation in Oi!. Increasing the level of pseudo-intransigence … led to rhetoric about the 'proletariat' being more narrowly defined in terms of the 'white working class'. The racism of the 'white power rock and roll' bands was predicated on notions of … 'masculinity' … and was thereby inverted, becoming camp and ultimately … admitting (at least to each other) that they were gay. In this way, through the bridging concept of sexuality, the Punk Rock dialectic shifts its mode of organisation from theatrics about race to rhetoric about gender, with the resulting emergence of the Riot Grrrl 'movement' … a quantitative increase in levels of concern about femininity will result in the discourse ultimately adopting Mother Earth, or ecology, as its ideological organising principle.[105]

The logical leaps here far outstrip even Hebdige's inventive dialecticianship. Home describes his own book as:

> merely the best theoretical account of the phenomenon to date … until someone like me, who possesses a modicum of intelligence, wastes a couple of weeks pursuing similar trivialities, my text will remain the only work on PUNK ROCK that is worth reading.[106]

It is hard to take Home seriously here. He warns that 'various clowns will attempt to dismiss the dialectic whose existence I have sketched as absurd,'[107] but earlier in the text Home also writes: 'I'm gonna unveil a theory of Punk Rock that is so utterly sublime that you won't know whether I'm seriously putting it forward as a means of understanding the subject or just satirising the writing of dickheads like [Greil] Marcus.'[108] Of course, to risk being deemed a clown by Home, his dialectic *is* absurd – but perhaps *it is meant to be* absurd. While Home usefully argues against the dominant influence of the likes of the Sex Pistols in considerations of punk, and moves on to examine scenes such as Riot Grrrl, Oi!, and discusses obscure(ish) bands like Vegan Reich, and even highly controversial bands including Skrewdriver, the Hegelian dialectic still requires a flattening of complications in order to conjure up simple and synthesisable theses and antitheses. Home

[104] Ibid. p. 93
[105] Ibid. pp. 117, 118
[106] Ibid. p. 119
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid. p. 21

mentions more scenes and bands than most historical accounts of punk, and his insider critical engagement is often illuminating, but *Cranked Up Really High* remains *highly* selective in terms of providing fodder for his dialectic. And in the end, maybe the whole text is simply a satirical joke, as he appears to suggest.

So, neither Hebdige's nor Thompson's attempts to analyse punk in terms of Marxist-Hegelian dialectics are convincing (not even to the authors themselves), while Home's absurd dialectic is most generously understood as a long-winded satire of 'intellectualised' accounts of punk. However, these attempts at dialectical analysis are not coincidental – they are driven by a recognition of punk's 'contradictions' and tensions. While other analyses simply ignore those aspects of punk which don't fit their pre-determined theory, at least these dialecticians are alive to the amorphousness of punk, even though their ideological perspectives lead them astray in developing a coherent understanding of it.

Rudolf Rocker[109] argues that Marx's Hegelianism 'enmeshed the minds of his followers in the fine network of a cunning dialectic which sees in history hardly anything but economics.'[110] Rocker, like numerous other anarchist political philosophers, recognises dialectical interpretations as analytically limiting. In contrast to the wilfully ignorant/myopic narratives or dialectical approaches described above, the current thesis *embraces* the amorphousness of punk, and it does so through an anarchist deployment of antinomy.

- **Theoretical framework – antinomy**

As described above, histories of punk are predominantly fascinated by the punk scene in the UK of the late-1970s (and ignorant of all other punk scenes as a result) and even within this short time frame, they are focussed almost exclusively on the influence of a tiny number of commercially successful bands and individuals.[111] Obviously, this narrow historical focus is countered with the *contemporary* subject matter of this thesis, but additionally there is a clear recognition that punk is

[109] As with Proudhon, discussed below, some commentators are confused over Rocker's position on dialectics. For example: Ray E. Chase's preface to the translated version of *Nationalism and Culture* introduces Rocker as 'a competent dialectician,' (p. xvii), though Rocker's actual writing in the book is strongly dismissive of Hegelian (and Marxist) dialectics, and is clearly antinomian in the vein of Proudhon. (Ray E. Chase, 'Preface,' in Rudolf Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, Ray E. Chase (trans.), (St. Paul, Minnesota: Michael E. Coughlin, 1978 [1937])

[110] Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 235

[111] Roger Sabin complains, 'how many more times must we hear the Sex Pistols story?' (Sabin, 'Introduction,' *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 2), and Marc Bayard asks, 'were they really worth dozens and dozens of lousy academic and pop culture music books written about them?' (Marc Bayard, 'Introduction,' in O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 11)

made-up of innumerable influences which cannot be bulldozered into simplicity, and that these antagonisms within punk provide the tensions along which it constantly evolves. Punk is not understandable in terms of a linear narrative, and any claim that punk '*is*' something can likely be countered with an equally valid claim that it '*is not*.' Terry Perlin wrote that 'there are as many anarchisms as there are anarchists,'[112] and the same amorphousness is identified in punk: Sandra Jeppesen writes that 'there are as many categories of punks as there are bands';[113] Tim Yohannan, founding editor of *MaximumRockNRoll* zine, argued that 'if you ask any two people who say they're into punk what it is, you're just gonna get totally different answers … It's *not a definable thing* any longer';[114] Brian Cogan observes that 'punk is best seen as a virus, one that mutates constantly and *resists efforts at understanding and codification*.'[115]

Fig. 1.1 – Banner of P.J. Proudhon at the Klub Anarchistyczny at Rozbrat Squat, Poznań.

While reductive models of research and analysis might view this as an impassable difficulty, the recognition of punk as ill-defined (or even indefinable) provides the central plank of the theoretical framework of this thesis, drawing from Kant's concept of antinomy, especially as deployed by Proudhon and other anarchists, which allows for an embrace of punk's antagonisms and tensions while still enabling meaningful analysis. Proudhon[116] describes the concept of antinomies as the

[112] Terry M. Perlin 'Preface' in *Contemporary Anarchism*, Terry M. Perlin (ed.), (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979), preface (n.p.)
[113] Sandra Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.' *Anarchist Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, (2011), p. 36
[114] Tim Yohannan interviewed by Scott M. X. Turner in 'Maximising Rock and Roll: Tim Yohannan interview,' in *Sounding Off! Music as subversion/resistance/revolution*, Ron Sakolsky and Fred Wei-han Ho (eds.), (New York: Autonomedia, 1995), p. 182, [emphasis added]
[115] Cogan, '"Do They Owe Us a Living?"' p. 79, [emphasis added]
[116] Daniel Guérin, in his four volume *No Gods, No Masters. An anthology of anarchism*, describes Proudhon as being 'torn … in terms of theory, between Hegelian philosophy and English political economy,' (p. 40), and

'plurality of elements, the struggle of elements, the opposition of contraries.'[117] Diane Morgan makes clear that, in Proudhon's use of antinomies, these tensions and antagonisms are expressly *not* to be synthesised: 'Out of these antinomies, their conflicts and precarious equilibrium, comes growth and development; *any fusional resolution or the elimination of one of the terms would be the equivalent of death*.'[118] So, this is not dialectical – as Nicolas Walter puts it: 'We [anarchists] see history not as a linear or a dialectical development in one direction, but as a dualistic process … This tension is *never resolved*.'[119] And, despite their best efforts to do otherwise, this is exactly the conclusion that Hebdige and Thompson come to in their analyses of punk.

An antinomous understanding avoids misleading simplifications of punk and its myriad contradictions and tensions. Duncombe, when questioned by Roger Sabin about the 'confused picture' that punk often presents, replied: 'We revel in that confusion!'[120] This is the only useful approach for analysis of punk. Any attempt to smooth over this confusion results in skewed and dishonest reflections of punk – and, as described above, this has very often been the case. Henri De Lubac notes that '[w]ith Proudhon the debate is never closed.'[121] Likewise, this thesis does not aim to close down debate, it aims to open up and explore the *relationships between* punk and anarchism, rather than become bogged-down in fruitless attempts at a closed definition of either.

So this thesis contributes to the redress of academic engagements with punk, by offering a critically engaged insider perspective, which moves beyond the myopic fascination with the late-1970s punk scene by focussing on contemporary punk scenes in the UK, Poland and Indonesia. The punks, as interview respondents, are given voice here, and while interpretations and theory are induced from

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indeed provides an excerpt from Proudhon's *Confessions d'un révolutionaire pour servir à l'histoire de la revolution de février* (1849) in which he writes that 'the antinomial forces of society … have to be kept in a constant equilibrium, and the antagonism perpetually reproduced by the essential tension between society and the individual has to be perpetually redirected into *synthesis*' (p. 57), which seems to back-up Guérin's claim of a Hegelian influence which is not 'successfully discard[ed]' (p. 39), and is contrary to his later writing on antinomies. (Daniel Guérin, *No Gods, No Masters. An anthology of anarchism*, Paul Sharkey (trans.), (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005 [1980]))

[117] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Théorie de la propriété*, p. 229, cited and translated by Diane Morgan, 'Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Proudhon, "Utopian" French Socialism,' in *Vol. I (1780-1840) History of Continental Philosophy*, Tom Nenon (ed.), (Dublin: Acumen Press, 2010), p. 302

[118] Morgan, 'Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Proudhon,' p. 301, citing Proudhon, *Théorie de la propriété*, p. 52, [emphasis added]. In Proudhon's words: 'What particular proposition … can be called *truth*? None; opposition, antagonism and antinomy burst out everywhere. The real truth is: (1) in equilibrium, a thing which our reason excellently conceives … but which is only a relation; (2) in the whole, which we can never possibly embrace.' P.J. Proudhon, *Théorie de l'impôt* in *The Works of P.J. Proudhon*, Benjamin Tucker (ed.), vol. xv, (1868), pp. 226-227 cited by Henri De Lubac in *The Un-Marxian Socialist*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1948), p. 146

[119] Nicolas Walter, *About Anarchism*, (London: Freedom Press, 2002 [1969]), p. 30

[120] Sabin, 'Interview with Stephen Duncombe and Maxwell Tremblay,' *Punk and Post-Punk*, p. 107

[121] De Lubac, *The Un-Marxian Socialist*, p. 165

this 'data,' the analysis is not assumed to provide a definitive account of punk. In Edward Said's terms, this thesis embraces 'a plurality of audiences and constituencies' rather than:

> working on behalf of One audience which is the only one that counts, or for one supervening, overcoming Truth … On the contrary, we note here a plurality of terrains, multiple experiences, and different constituencies … [W]hat might be called a decentred consciousness, *not less reflective and critical for being decentred*.[122]

As will be described in the methodology, the testimony of the interviewees grounds the subsequent analysis, and as such a plurality of perspectives is encompassed. Tensions are identified and explored, rather than being ignored or simplified. This thesis may not resonate with *everyone*'s experience of punk (and nor should it), but it resonates with my own experience and the experiences of the interviewees, and makes a solid representation of the relationships between anarchism and punk in those terms *at least*.

Audience three – Anti-academic Punks (methodology)

The editors of the *Punk & Post-Punk* journal note the 'extent to which anyone professing an interest in punk academia has to negotiate suspicions of their role from both the punk community … but also the academy.'[123] As pointed out in the literature review above, the last five years or so indicate an increasing seriousness in the academic approach to punk, as led by scholars from *inside* the punk community. As part of this trend, and in combination with a rigorous methodology and insightful critical analysis, this thesis should negotiate any 'suspicions' from within the academy without trouble.[124] However, there is considerable hostility to 'punk academia' from some punks, and as an insider account which strives to be reflexive, sensitive, democratic, and non-exploitative, this must be negotiated with care. Penny Rimbaud, formerly of Crass fame, attended an academic conference in Wolverhampton in 2001[125] and, echoing the comments in the literature review above, complained that anarcho-punk, and especially his own band Crass, had been 'studiously ignored.'[126] He wrote in 2009:

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[122] Edward Said, 'Orientalism Reconsidered,' *Cultural Critique*, no. 1, (autumn 1985), pp. 105-106, [emphasis added]
[123] Kiszely and Ogg, 'Editorial,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 3
[124] And, frankly, if 'the academy' isn't satisfied – fuck 'em!
[125] 'No Future?: Punk 2001,' University of Wolverhampton, 21st-23rd September 2001. See: http://goldenpages.jpehs.co.uk/static/conferencearchive/01-9-nof.html [accessed 26th February 2016]
[126] Penny Rimbaud, *The Last of the Hippies. An hysterical romance*, (Oakland: PM Press, 2015 [2009]), p. 2

> What the Wolverhampton conference proved to me was the wholly collusive nature of the relationship between corporate capitalism, politics, the media *and academia*. If history is to serve the interests of the dominant culture … then its writers … must toe the line, which isn't very difficult given that corporate capitalism finances most academic institutions.[127]

So Rimbaud rejects academic intrusions into punk as another aspect of capitalist attempts to neutralise its subversive aspects and recuperate it safely into the mainstream. *MaximumRockNRoll* zine has been another prominent voice among the attacks on academic incursions into punk, especially in two of its recent content coordinators Mariam Bastani and Lydia Phelps. Bastani identifies herself 'as a person [who] constantly slams and loathes "punkademics",'[128] describes the 'recent slew of "academic punk books"' as 'garbage,'[129] and reviewed Zack Furness's *Punkademics*[130] book simply as 'shitty.'[131] The 'Education Special' issue of *One Way Ticket to Cubesville*[132] zine, which Bastani reviews in *MaximumRockNRoll* #356, includes interview material from myself and other 'punkademics' in the UK (Charlotte Spithead, Michelle Liptrot, and Alastair Gordon). Despite Bastani's clearly espoused oppositional stance, she writes:

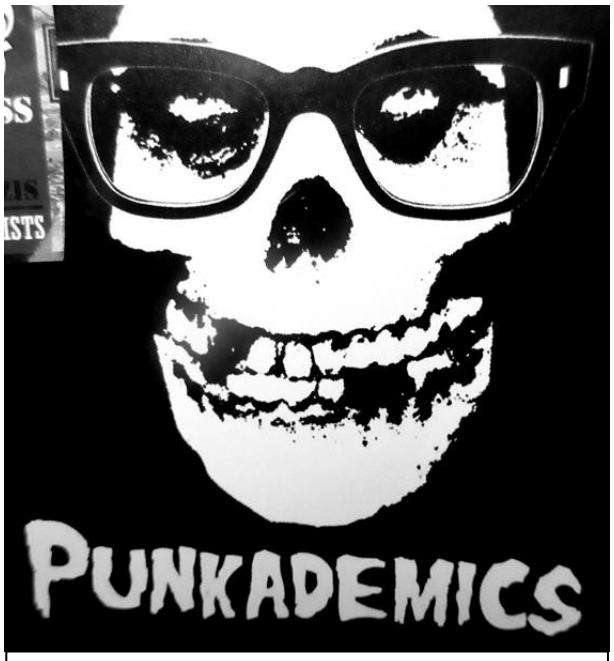

Fig. 1.2 – Sticker which accompanied the book *Punkademics*, in pastiche of the Misfits skull logo.

> I was interested in seeing another take on this very subject … [T]he convincing arguments here are the following: punk in academia is a way to hear lost narratives, highlighting perhaps an alternative to the ways we live our lives, reaching more people than just punks. And when it comes down to it, if we don't write and critique our own history, it is only a matter of time until other people attempt to do this for us (which is definitely

[127] Rimbaud, *The Last of the Hippies*, p. 14, [emphasis added]
[128] Mariam Bastani, review of the *One Way Ticket To Cubesville* education issue, *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 356, (January 2013), n.p.
[129] Mariam Bastani, response to letter, *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 353, (October 2012), n.p.
[130] Zack Furness (ed.), *Punkademics. The basement show in the ivory tower*, (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2012)
[131] Bastani, review of the *One Way Ticket To Cubesville*, *MaximumRockNRoll*, n.p.
[132] *One Way Ticket to Cubesville*, no. 13, (autumn 2012)

> happening). Who better to write about punk through an academic lens then [*sic*] a punk? I understand the argument, but I am still wary.[133]

I share Bastani's wariness, but it is pleasing that these arguments are found to be convincing by someone so sharply dismissive of punk academia. It is also noteworthy that Rimbaud has been a regular panel guest at recent conferences of the Punk Scholars Network,[134] indicating a similar rapprochement to punk academia on his part as well. Lydia Phelps, a former content coordinator for *MaximumRockNRoll*, was prompted by the 'MET Gala's Costume Institute exhibit titled "Punk: Chaos to Couture"'[135] to 'rant' in her regular column:

> Another outsider, mainstream sociological assumption from an institution … Every attempt to define and describe punk falls flat, coming off more like dry academic observation, or stranger curiosity, even enemy propaganda. So many books written about punk, yet so few actually turn to the punks living and breathing today for an opinion. Probably just as well, most punks I know would tell a conservative mainstream magazine to shove it up their corporate ass … For us, *punk is by the punks for the punks*. Any other way has the iffy smell of sell-out bucks.[136]

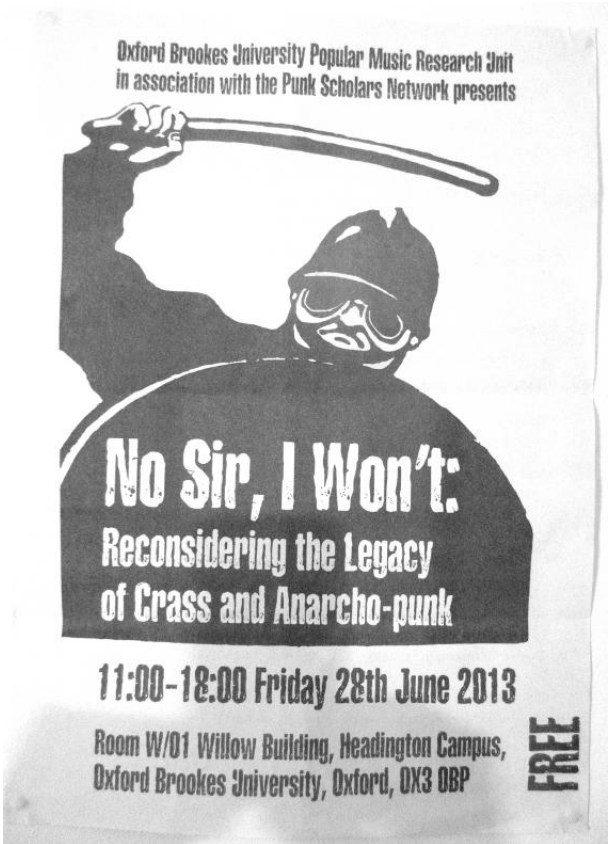

Fig. 1.3 – Poster for Punk Scholars Network conference, which included Rimbaud as a panel contributor.

This echoes the criticisms of other academic accounts of punk in the literature review above – and as stated, this thesis *does* turn to the 'punks living and breathing today' for their opinions, perspectives and reflections. However, the issue of being a 'sell-out' also has

[133] Bastani, review of *One Way Ticket To Cubesville*, *MaximumRockNRoll*, n.p.
[134] For example: Roundtable with Penny Rimbaud, George McKay and Sarah McHendry, 'No Sir I Won't: reconsidering the legacy of Crass and anarcho-punk (Punk Scholars Network & Oxford Brookes University Popular Music Research Unit),' Oxford Brookes University, 28th June 2013; 'The Punk Scholars Network in association with Cultural Exchanges presents: Penny Rimbaud,' De Montfort University, 21st February 2014.
[135] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 'Punk: Chaos to Couture' exhibition, 9th May-14th August 2013. See: http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2013/punk [accessed 22nd February 2016]
[136] Lydia Phelps, 'Who Gives a Shit?' column, *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 362, (July 2013), n.p., [emphasis added]

resonance. This was brought home to me on my second trip to Indonesia, while on tour with Die Wrecked in January 2015. Two Swiss journalists were among those attending Libertad Fest, which was organised by Bandung Pyrate Punx on a tiny island in the Java Sea. They were perceived as outsiders by the festival attendees because of their distinguishing aesthetic (i.e. not punk), because they kept to themselves and didn't interact with the punks, and aroused deep suspicion with their expensive camera equipment, especially when taking photographs without permission. After some discussion among concerned festival attendees and the festival organisers, the journalists were questioned about their motives, with an especially strong emphasis on their *publication intentions*. Initially, they suggested that they would sell the story to a magazine in Switzerland. This was met with objection in the strongest terms by the festival attendees, so the journalists compromised and suggested they would provide the story to the Swiss equivalent of *The Big Issue*.[137] In fact, and assumedly as a direct result of the objections from the festival attendees and the pressure placed on the journalists, they produced a zine-style publication titled *Poison Island*.[138] They write: 'Our experiences inspired us to make a fanzine – reviving the subcultures' almost forgotten and wonderfully subjective information service.'[139] The journalists neglect to mention the friction their presence at the festival caused, display ignorance of the flourishing zine culture that still permeates punk, and did not engage in DIY production/publication – in this sense they remain, firmly, *outsiders*. However, to their credit, they do assert that '[a]ll profits from sales of Poison Island will go back to the local scenes.'[140] Importantly though, this reminded me that my own position as a researcher a few years previously in 2012, armed with a notepad, voice recorder and camera, was not so dissimilar to that of the journalists. Even as an insider, there are potential pitfalls of exploitation. The journalists negotiated the objections to their potential sell-out by returning profits to the punk scenes locally. If this thesis were to be published in book form, the same issue of profit and selling-out[141] would emerge in a very similar way – but even as an unpublished PhD thesis, there are issues of exploitation to be considered, which will be a key concern in the methodology.

[137] They may have been referring to *Surprise. Strassenmagazine*, http://www.strassenmagazin.ch/ [accessed 22nd February 2016]
[138] Matthias Willi and Olivier Joliat, *Poison Island*, (Basel: Rough Publications, 2015), named after Bandung Pyrate Punx's 'Racun Island' ('*racun*' means 'poison' in Indonesian).
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.
[141] The issue of selling-out in punk generally will be discussed in Chapter 6.

- **Methodology**

The methodology of this research is qualitative, inductive, grounded, and interpretive, and makes use of open-ended, unstructured[142] interviewing and participant observation techniques. The methodology draws significantly from Grounded Theory Method, but does not adhere to 'strict' interpretations of it. Perspectives drawn from Said's *Orientalism* further inform the approach and the analysis.

- *Description of the fieldwork undertaken*

In total, 50 interviews were carried out with 72 respondents:[143] 21 interviews with 37 respondents in Indonesia (six women and 31 men); sixteen interviews with eighteen respondents in Poland (five women and thirteen men); thirteen interviews with seventeen respondents in the UK (seven women and ten men).[144] I have been an active participant in the punk scenes in all three case studies to varying degrees, and additional primary information is gleaned from zine materials and commodities such as records, tapes, CDs, posters and patches. Fieldnotes were taken to record participant observations and analytical memos, but owing to the often sensitive nature of the research, photography was limited.

Drafts of the case study foci (i.e. the substantive descriptions that make up chapters 3, 4, and 5) were sent to interviewees in each case study context, with an invitation for comment, correction, and critique, and even veto over content attributed to them. Importantly, this gives final control of their own representation back to the interviewees. This approach was successful in ironing-out some factual misunderstandings and spelling errors, as well as adding a dialogical aspect to the research method. Any additional information or reflections garnered through this process are referenced accordingly – and any errors which do remain are wholly my own. However, it must be noted that the majority of interviewees did not respond to the e-mails containing the draft work. This might be due to inaccurate e-mail addresses (though the bounce-rate was actually very low), and in the Indonesian and Polish contexts is also likely to have been influenced by the language barrier. Even respondents with a high level of conversational competence in English are likely to find academic 'formal' writing to be challenging (or just boring!). In all cases it might simply be the case

[142] The interviews were theoretically focussed, though fluid and in a general sense unstructured. The application of theoretical sampling served to focus the latter interviews more closely, but it would be too much to describe even these as 'semi-structured.'
[143] There were several group interviews, especially in Indonesia.
[144] Some of the interviewees were transgender, but self-identified specifically as one gender rather than non-gendered, inter-gendered, or queer-gendered.

that interviewees lacked the time or inclination to read through draft work and offer comment, and they were under no obligation to do so. While this approach did yield some useful and enlightening feedback from interviewees, its success was limited. But even without interviewee responses, this methodological approach promotes a democratic consciousness on the part of the researcher in terms of representing interviewees' testimony accurately, and any subtle temptations to do otherwise are closed-off. The anonymity of the respondents has been protected by using pseudonyms and censoring any photography, particularly essential here owing to the sensitive nature of some of the activities discussed, and because of the severe repression meted-out to the punk scene by the authorities, especially in Indonesia. Individual interviewees' names are anonymised, as are the names of bands of which respondents are members, but to save considerable confusion the real names of collectives, squats, and organised groups remain, on the understanding that the larger memberships of these groups provides a degree of anonymity (or at least plausible deniability) for individuals within them.

The fieldwork in Indonesia was carried out between the 23rd September and 3rd October 2012, during which time the interviews were conducted, except for one interview conducted by e-mail in February 2013, with an additional period of participant observation from 16th-26th January 2015 as part of a tour of South East Asia with the band Die Wrecked, and continued online social contact with scene participants. Interviews were carried out in the cities of Jakarta, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi (all in the Greater Jakarta Area), Bandung (in West Java), Medan and Banda Aceh (in Sumatra), and the gigs were in Medan, Pekanbaru, Padang (all in Sumatra), and 'Racun Island' (in the Java Sea)[145] (see Appendix 1, Map B). The fieldwork and gigging tour were extremely immersive and intense interactions with the Indonesian scene. The Indonesian punk scene was thrust into the wider global consciousness by the highly reported abduction and torture of 64 punks in Banda Aceh in December 2011, just after the PhD research had begun. The seemingly anomalous severity of this incident, coupled with a sheer curiosity about punk on the other side of the world, led

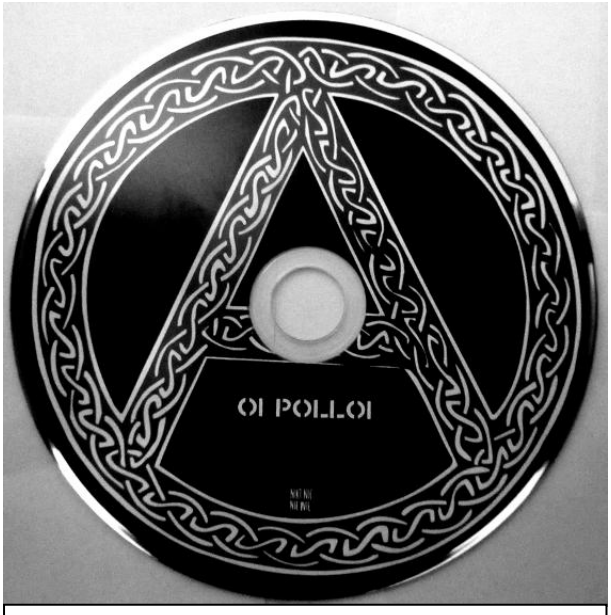

Fig. 1.4 – Disc of Oi Polloi's *Ar Ceòl, Ar Cànan, Ar-A-Mach*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2006).

[145] The name given to the island in the Java Sea which hosted Libertad Fest – for reasons of security and anonymity, the island's real name will not be divulged.

to Indonesia becoming a case study for this research. As evidence of the practical benefits of an insider position, my initial contact in Indonesia was fortuitously gleaned from the back of an Oi Polloi patch acquired at the Nottingham (UK) Punx Picnic in 2012. The global punk network connected the local UK scene to the Indonesian scene in the form of a punk commodity, and insider status meant easy negotiation of 'gatekeepers' and a warm welcome from the punk community in Indonesia. In keeping with a Grounded Theory Method approach, I knew very little about the Indonesian punk scene prior to the fieldtrip, other than the news reports of December 2011. The only academic literature encountered by that point was Emma Baulch's sociological descriptions of Green Day fans in Bali in the 1990s.[146] The incident in Banda Aceh, and the source of my initial contact in Jakarta, suggested that the punk scene in contemporary Indonesia was very different to that described by Baulch. Language was an obvious issue for research in Indonesia – I do not speak Indonesian, and many of the interviewees did not speak English. An interpreter was used to facilitate interviewing in cases where interviewees did not speak English, and these interviews were subsequently translated by bilingual comrades in Bandung. There was one instance of an interviewee with a low level of competence in English insisting on carrying-on the interview in English, despite the presence of a bilingual interpreter, which resulted in a poor quality interview. However, for the most part interviews were very successful, whether in English or with the use of an interpreter.

The fieldwork in Poland was carried out between the 14th May and 5th June 2013, with participation in gigs as part of European tours with the Lobotomies in May 2009 and Die Wrecked in October 2014. As in Indonesia these were periods of intense immersion in the Polish punk scene. Interviews were carried out in the cities of Poznań (in Wielkopolski voivodeship), Warsaw (in Mazowieckie), and Wrocław (in Dolnośląskie), with one interview respondent from Poland also interviewed in London, UK. The gigs were in Poznań, Warsaw, and Dębica (in Podkarpackie) (see Appendix 1 Map C). Despite having played two gigs in Poland prior to the research, this was another punk scene of which I had little prior knowledge. Poland was of interest as a case study context partly because of this lack of knowledge, and a curiosity about a relatively low-profile (yet prolific!) scene within Europe, and partly also because of a vague appreciation of punk's emergence in Poland during the Soviet-sphere communist regime, which was in itself intriguing. English language academic material on punk in Poland is very sparse indeed, and I had not encountered *any* such material prior to the fieldwork there. My initial contact was with an activist at Rozbrat squat in Poznań, through a mutual acquaintance at a Polish DIY punk label. Again, insider status allowed me to access international punk networks and rely on a warm welcome in the Polish punk scene. Language was a factor for the

[146] See: Emma Baulch, *Making Scenes: reggae, punk, and death metal in 1990s Bali*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007); 'Creating a scene: Balinese punk's beginnings,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, (2002), pp. 153-177

research in Poland as well, though here the huge majority of interviewees were highly proficient in English. One interview was carried out with an interpreter and subsequently translated. More so than in Indonesia, the ability to speak English was an influence over interviewee (self-)selection in Poland. One person refused to be interviewed, giving the reason that they could not speak English, but even with the arrangement of an interpreter the interview was still refused, so the language factor may have actually been a polite excuse. It is also notable that the inhabitants of one of the squats at which I stayed held an 'anti-punk' perspective, and as a result fobbed-off my requests for an interview. So in this case, an insider punk status actually inhibited research access – though the hospitality shown was still generous in the extreme.

The interviews in the UK were conducted between August and December 2013 in Belfast (in Northern/North of Ireland), Glasgow (in Scotland), London, Manchester, Brighton, and Warwick (all in England) (see Appendix 1 Map D). I have been an active participant in several hundred gigs[147] across the UK with dozens of bands since 2001, though during the research period this was primarily with the Leicester-based band Die Wrecked. Close involvement with the anarchist movement and punk scene in the UK, as well as ease of access and numerous contacts made the UK an obvious choice of case study. However, whereas the fieldwork in Indonesia and Poland was based on short but intensive, immersive periods of research with chance encounter interviews snowballing from one initial point of contact, the fieldwork in the UK extended over several months with interviewees drawn from personal contacts, rather than coincidence or snowballing. In Indonesia and Poland, while being an insider in terms of the global punk scene, I was still an outsider to the local punk contexts. The aspect of 'outsiderness' in Indonesia and Poland offered a degree of useful critical distance, but in the UK, the insider status was redoubled, especially in familiar scenes such as London, Manchester, and especially Belfast. In this insider context the methodology is especially important in terms of gaining critical distance, as will be described below. However, the insider perspective, though not evenly positioned across the case study contexts, remains hugely beneficial to the research.

- *A non-exploitative methodology*

As discussed above, punks are highly suspicious of academic incursions into their scenes, and as a punk insider I have no wish to exploit punk either. Linda Tuhiwai Smith asks eight questions to

[147] c. 500, as a minimum estimate.

appraise the potential for exploitation in approaches to ethnographic research among indigenous peoples, and they are useful in interrogating the methodology here as well:

1. What research do we want done?
2. Who is it for?
3. What difference will it make?
4. Who will carry it out?
5. How do we want the research done?
6. How will we know it is worthwhile?
7. Who will own the research?
8. Who will benefit?[148]

In answer:

1. The research 'I want done' is into the relationships between anarchism and punk, and the tensions I have observed around that as an actively engaged participant.
2. As stated in the identification of distinct 'audiences' above, this research is for myself, for the academic community, *and* for anarchist comrades, *and* for the punks.
3. It is hoped that the research will challenge some of the simplistic and misguided notions of punk in the academic community, as well as providing fuel for contemplation among punk scenes and the anarchist movement about their interrelationships.
4. *I* have carried out the research, in the combined role of academic researcher and critical insider.
5. The research methodology is reflexive, sensitive, democratic, and non-exploitative, while also being rigorous, analytical, and critical.
6. As a minimum, if even just one person takes enjoyment from reading this thesis, or if one interviewee gained fresh insight into their own practices through the research process, then it has been worthwhile.
7. The research is in some sense 'mine,' in that I am the researcher and author, but the views presented here remain those of the individual interviewees. In terms of proprietarial 'ownership,' I assert no copyright over the final published thesis (despite any claims by the University otherwise). To use Creative Commons licensing terminology, the thesis is

[148] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 'Kaupapa Maori Research,' in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, Marie Battiste (ed.), (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), p. 239, quoted in Norman K. Denzin, 'Grounded Theory and Politics of Interpretation,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz (eds.), (London: SAGE, 2007), p. 465

'Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International' – so is not intended for commercial use by anyone, and can be shared freely, preferably with authorial attribution.

8. I have benefitted, financially in terms of three years of funding for the PhD research and additional travel funding, and personally from being able to engage in fulfilling, relatively unalienated work for the last four years and more, and having the opportunity to travel and meet a huge number of inspiring people in the UK, Poland and Indonesia. This research also benefits the academic community in terms of providing new empirical information and critical analysis. There is also a contribution to (or challenge to) the anarchist movement and punk scene by providing material, framing debates, and offering analysis, which participants may find useful in (re-)evaluating their perspectives on the relationships between anarchism and punk, and indeed the wider issues to which that relationship speaks.

In keeping with this commitment to avoid exploitative research practices, the methodology here is in sharp distinction to the approaches criticised above. As Uri Gordon writes in the methodology of his own PhD thesis:

> the anarchist enterprise of theory and study has traditionally retained a close relationship to its authors' activities as militants … This type of theorising activity is, I think, part of what makes the anarchist tradition unique, or at least distinct, particularly from orthodox Marxism. To think like a Marxist is, first and foremost, to adopt an ontology and epistemology (dialectical materialism, class analysis), then to read off any political consequences from that basis. To think like an anarchist is, first and foremost, to adopt a certain orientation to doing politics, while acknowledging that a plurality of ontological and epistemological frameworks can fit in with it.[149]

The 'plurality' which Gordon points to has been discussed in terms of antinomies above, and like Gordon's 'anarchist militant authors' this research is from an insider perspective. In terms of specific methodology, it is argued here that Grounded Theory Method offers the best fit with research which is rigorous, analytical, and critical, but which is at the same time reflexive, sensitive, democratic, and non-exploitative. In Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin's explication, Grounded Theory Method embraces plurality, and therefore operates consistently alongside the antinomy framework:

[149] Uri Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory: Contemporary Problems*, PhD thesis, Mansfield College University of Oxford, (2007), p. 16, accessed online at: http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/uri-gordon-anarchism-and-political-theory-contemporary-problems [accessed 15th February 2016]

> Because they embrace the interaction of multiple actors, and because they emphasise the temporality and process, [Grounded Theories] indeed have a striking fluidity … They demand an openness of the researcher, based on the 'forever' provisional character of every theory.[150]

So while maintaining empirical rigour, the theory constructed is not claimed to be 'definitive.' And in terms of being reflexive, sensitive, democratic, and non-exploitative, Strauss and Corbin assert that 'interpretations *must* include the perspectives and voices of the people whom we study.'[151] Gordon argues similarly that:

> the process of generating anarchist theory itself has to be dialogical, in the sense that both the people whose ideas and practices are examined, and the people who are going to be formulating theory on their basis, have to be involved in the process of theorising. Only from this dialogical connectedness can the anarchist theorist draw the confidence to speak.[152]

In particular, the process of offering draft work to respondents for comment and reflection fits well with this democratic consideration. Gordon points to similar perspectives as espoused by Marianne Gullestad and Sandra Jeppesen to argue that the voice of the intellectual should no longer come 'from above, but from within,'[153] emphasising that an insider perspective increases reflexivity, sensitivity and commitment to avoid exploitation. So a methodology drawn from Grounded Theory Method (at least as explicated by Strauss and Corbin) fits well with an anarchist approach generally, and *especially* with 'anti-academic' entities such as punk.

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[150] Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, 'Grounded Theory Methodology. An overview,' in *Strategies of Inquiry*, Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (eds.), (Boston, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1975), p. 279

[151] Strauss and Corbin, 'Grounded Theory Methodology,' in *Strategies of Inquiry*, p. 274

[152] Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory*, PhD thesis, p. 14

[153] See: Marianne Gullestad, 'The politics of knowledge,' at 'Advancing Cultural Studies International Workshop,' Stockholm, (1999), culturemachine.tees.ac.uk [date of access not given in original reference]; Sandra Jeppesen, 'Where Does Anarchist Theory Come From?' Institute of Anarchist Studies Theory & Politics column (2004b), www.anarchist-studies.org [date of access not given in original reference]. As quoted in Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory*, PhD thesis, p. 14

- *Grounded Theory Method*

In terms of empiricism and rigour, Grounded Theory Method is valuable because it acknowledges the importance of getting 'out into the field to discover what is really going on.'[154] The actual lived experience of scene participants is key to the analysis, because 'theory … emerge[s] from the data' and as such:

> is more likely to resemble the 'reality' than is theory derived by putting together a series of concepts based on experience or solely through speculation … Grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action.[155]

Kathy Charmaz contrasts the Grounded Theory Method (as first described by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss[156]) 'with armchair and logico-deductive theorising.' Glaser and Strauss's method is argued to be advantageous 'because they began with data and systematically raised the conceptual level of their analyses while maintaining the strong foundation in data.'[157]

While this approach offers empirical strength and analytical rigour, Grounded Theory Method is also sensitive and democratic in its emphasis on *giving voice*[158] to the people who are the subject of research. As Strauss and Corbin put it: 'the methodology enjoins taking with great seriousness the words and actions of the people studied.'[159] They quote Berenice Fisher's realisation that research 'didn't have to be removed from people's lives, that it could be connected directly to where people were in the world and what they thought about it.'[160] In keeping with the anarchistic approach of this thesis generally, Norman K. Denzin describes Grounded Theory Method as 'subversive':

> there is no grand or middle or formal theory here, no formal propositions, no testable hypotheses … It is intuitive. You let the obdurate empirical world speak to you, you listen,

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[154] Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, (London: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1998), p. 9
[155] Ibid. p. 12
[156] Barney G. Glaser & Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies of qualitative research*, (Hawthorne, New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967)
[157] Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, (London: SAGE, 2014), p. 8
[158] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 43
[159] Ibid. p. 6
[160] Berenice Fisher's 'talk honouring Anselm [Strauss] at his retirement in the summer of 1987' quoted in David R. Maines, 'Reflections, Framings, and Appreciations,' in *Social Organization and Social Process. Essays in Honor of Anselm Strauss*, David R. Maines (ed.), (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1991), p. 8, quoted in Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 6

> … *No hierarchy*, the social theorists are not privileged. In the world of [Grounded Theory] anybody can be a theorist.[161]

Because Grounded Theory Method 'emulates rather than repudiates everyday thinking,'[162] it reflects interviewees' own testimony as closely possible, and the emphasis on bottom-up theory construction and analysis, and a commitment to non-exploitation of interviewees and scenes mean a neat fit with an anarchist position.

- *Issues with 'strict' Grounded Theory Method*

These aspects of Grounded Theory Method obviously make it very attractive for the purposes of this research. However, as Ian Dey argues: '[t]here is no agreement on what constitutes a grounded theory, only varying interpretations which bear a family resemblance.'[163] Strauss and Corbin argue for a nebulous definition of Grounded Theory Method, encompassing a wide range of roughly similar approaches, while Glaser argues for a strict all-or-nothing definition. So, while this research fits with the flexible and adaptable methodology espoused by Strauss and Corbin, for the 'classic' or 'traditional' Glaserian Grounded Theorist there are aspects of the research method here which are problematic. The research method is argued to *draw upon* Grounded Theory Method rather than adhere to it closely, so frankly it is of little consequence whether or not it satisfies 'strict' Grounded Theorists – but their terms and definitions are at least useful as a tool for explaining and critiquing the methodology in more detail.

  - *Insider perspectives and preconceived theory*

The inductive approach insists that Grounded Theory emerges from the data – '[a] researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind … the researcher begins with an area of study.'[164] From an insider perspective this is obviously problematic. Even while academic literature on the specific contemporary contexts of Poland and Indonesia, and even the UK, was successfully avoided prior to the fieldwork, my immersion in the punk scene and anarchist movement clearly impacts upon the analysis. The 'strict' Grounded Theory Method approach demands a process of interviewing people at random and discerning the emergent phenomena. From an insider

[161] Denzin, 'Grounded Theory and Politics of Interpretation,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, p. 454
[162] Ian Dey, 'Grounding Categories,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, p. 169
[163] Ibid. p. 173
[164] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 12

perspective it is impossible to approach an 'area of study' without some degree of preconceived theory. In this research the core issue was drawn from my prior insider stance – i.e. a recognition of complications and tensions around the relationships between punk and anarchism, as sparked in the exchange described at the start of this chapter. This thesis aims to address a perceived 'problem' – which is focussed around the rejection of punk by some anarchists, and the attendant tensions between 'workerism' and 'lifestylism' within the anarchist spectrum. This critically engaged insider position, then, replaces the initial round of issue-identifying interviews of 'strict' Grounded Theory Method.

Strauss and Corbin write:

> Because this interplay requires immersion in the data, by the end of inquiry, the researcher is shaped by the data, just as the data are shaped by the researcher. (This does not imply that the researcher has 'gone native'; rather, he or she is sensitive to the issues and problems of the persons or places being investigated.)[165]

But, as a researcher, I have not 'gone native' – *I was already native*. Gordon asks: 'How does the researcher who is an *insider* maintain sufficient distance from the object of research, and … not lose her or his critical faculty having "gone native" in the field (or having been a native to begin with)?'[166] And this is a key issue here. It should be noted that Strauss and Glaser's original 'discovery' of Grounded Theory Method was in the context of the incredibly personally affective context of losing loved ones, with their subsequent research into end-of-life and palliative care.[167] Theirs was not a disinterested 'scientific' stance – and nor should it be. However, while I make no claim to be personally 'objective,' the Grounded Theory Method does necessitate rigour in terms of 'openness, a willingness to listen and to "give voice" to respondents.'[168] So, even while 'strict' Grounded Theory Method would find the insider status problematic, the method itself actually suits an insider perspective very well, by allowing the researcher to 'gain distance' through the central focus on interviewee testimony. But despite the valuable mitigations Grounded Theory Method offers, the insider perspective is, of course, an incredibly valuable one. As Gordon puts it:

> Far from erasing my critical faculties … this personal involvement imbued the critical process with a far more intense and powerful dimension – since by default it had to

[165] Ibid. p. 42
[166] Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory*, PhD thesis, p. 21
[167] See: Barney Galland Glaser & Anselm Leonard Strauss, *Awareness of Dying*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1966); Barney G. Glaser & Anselm L. Strauss, *Time for Dying*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1968)
[168] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 43

> involve a component of *self*-criticism. The theoretical issues I was dealing with had to be confronted, not only for the sake of detached understanding, but also in pursuit of personal and political growth … engaging in an honest and critical discussion became a matter of direct self interest.[169]

I share Gordon's sense of the research process as something personally important, and the view that this engagement is of benefit to the critical analysis, while also bolstering reflexivity and sensitivity.

- *Sampling (theoretical and otherwise)*

'Strict' Grounded Theorists argue for particular methodological processes which are 'defining'[170] or 'integral'[171] (though the methods espoused are very rarely shared by all 'strict' Grounded Theorists). Jane Hood epitomises the proscriptive attitude, arguing that researchers who claim 'to use Grounded Theory without using any of the most important attributes of the approach is misleading and has made the term "grounded theory" meaningless in the social science literature.'[172] One process which comes up in several 'definitions' of Grounded Theory Method is 'theoretical sampling,' which Charmaz describes as '[s]ampling aimed toward theory construction … not for population representativeness.'[173] Theoretical sampling *is* used in the methodology here, but not in a textbook fashion.

The interviewing in Indonesia and Poland was largely based on 'convenience sampling'[174] in terms of grabbing opportunities as they arose. As discussed above, my personal experience of, and immersion within punk and anarchism takes the place of an initial round of phenomena-identifying interviews in the 'classic' Grounded Theory Method. As such, the selection of interviewees in Indonesia and Poland was also, to some degree, based on 'purposeful sampling,' in that I targeted people who had interesting positions in the punk and/or anarchist milieus of those contexts in relation to my core research interest. Because the fieldwork in Poland came after the Indonesian fieldwork, there was also an element of 'theoretical sampling' here, especially in terms of the theme

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[169] Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory*, PhD thesis, p. 22

[170] Jane Hood, 'Orthodoxy vs. Power: The Defining Traits of Grounded Theory,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, pp. 151-164

[171] Carolyn Wiener, 'Making Teams Work in Conducting Grounded Theory,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, pp. 293-310

[172] Hood, 'Orthodoxy vs. Power,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, p. 164

[173] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, p. 8, referencing: Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*; Barney G. Glaser, *Theoretical Sensitivity: advances in the methodology of grounded theory*, (Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press, 1978); Anselm L. Strauss, *Qualitative Analysis for Social* Scientists, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)

[174] Janice M. Morse, 'Sampling in Grounded Theory,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, p. 236

(or 'code') of religion. This theme emerged strongly from the interviews in Indonesia, and as such was carried into the interviews in Poland and the UK – it is very doubtful that the theme of religion would have emerged from the interviews in either the Polish or UK contexts without being focussed on specifically as a result of its emergence in the Indonesian context. The interviewee selections in the UK were much more influenced by 'theoretical sampling' in an attempt to address nascent theories emergent from the interviews in Indonesia and Poland, especially in terms of the tensions between 'workerist' and 'lifestylist' anarchists and issues of class. In this way the sampling and interview emphases were 'based on evolving theoretical concepts.'[175] As Charmaz writes:

> [A]s you develop a theoretical direction, the *theoretical centrality* of certain ideas and areas of inquiry leads you to pursue them. You may decide to drop less compelling lines of inquiry in your data and nascent analysis. By this time, you will direct parts of your interviews to focussing on your main codes and tentative categories … The purpose of theoretical sampling is to make your theoretical categories robust.[176]

There was also a degree of 'purposeful sampling' in the UK interviews, when an early bias towards male respondents was redressed by targeting female and transgender respondents, especially those involved in Riot Grrrl, queer punk, and related scenes. In this instance the sampling can also be understood as 'theoretical' in relation to the emerging themes/codes of sexism and feminism.

- *Theoretical frameworks*

The adoption of overarching theoretical frameworks is also problematic for 'strict' Grounded Theory Method. As Strauss and Corbin argue frameworks 'help to generate theoretical questions … [but] can also focus an individual on one perspective or set of ideas so that he or she is not able to see what else might be in the data.'[177] However, the frameworks adopted here are antinomy and Orientalism (discussed more below), and the point of these is to emphasise an openness to unexpected data and lines of inquiry, and as such fits well with the construction of Grounded Theory.

[175] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 46
[176] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, p. 90
[177] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 24

- *Comparative aspect*

The key advantage of having several case studies is being able to compare the relationships between punk and anarchism across different contexts. This is also a key tenet of Grounded Theory Method, and as Strauss and Corbin note, in the 1960s and 1970s 'the approach [was] often referred to as the *constant comparative method*.'[178] Strauss and Corbin argue that Grounded Theory Method means 'obtain[ing] multiple viewpoints' and 'attempt[ing] to determine how the various actors in a situation view it,' which serves as a technique for 'gaining distance.'[179] And, '[b]y comparing incident to incident in the data, we are better able to stay grounded in them.'[180]

However, the contexts being compared here are most often denoted as nation states (UK, Poland, Indonesia), which is problematic from an anarchist (i.e. anti-statist) perspective, and also methodologically. Some of the interviewees in Poland discussed this issue specifically. In one sense it *is* possible think of the Polish punk scene as an interconnected and discrete whole, because as interviewee Marta said, 'Poland is a really small country, so we know each other very well.'[181] But, as might be expected, local variations also run in direct contradiction to this, as Adrian argued:

> there is nothing that we can call the Polish situation because it varies very much depending on the city you go to. So people in Poznań will tell you one thing and people in Warsaw, and people in Łodz, and people in Lublin will tell you something absolutely different and opposite to what you heard before.[182]

At the same time as local variation is an important factor to consider, there is also a recognisable global punk scene, with norms and practices which traverse national borders. The 'national' conception of these punk scenes is eroded simultaneously at the micro and macro levels – and the participants are anyway opposed to statism and nationalism. So while the case study contexts here are indicated by the nation-state labels 'UK,' 'Poland,' and 'Indonesia' it should be recognised that these scene demarcations are used as a matter of short-hand convenience, are fluid, and are employed loosely throughout this thesis.

[178] Strauss and Corbin, 'Grounded Theory Methodology,' in *Strategies of Inquiry*, p. 273
[179] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, p. 44
[180] Ibid. p. 43
[181] Interview conducted 25/05/2013
[182] Interview conducted 25/05/2013

- *Orientalism*

This discussion also raises the issue of Orientalism. The international punk scene is not exempt from the unequal cultural flows which result from economic disparity – indeed, it is often possible to read the neo-colonial relations of globalised capitalism in the relations between international punk scenes.[183] Across all the case study contexts, interviewees mentioned international visitors and bands from other parts of the world playing in their locale. But, this flow is heavily influenced by macro-economic factors – with the added dimension of cultural capital. This is evident in bands' ability to tour in different countries (in terms of affording the expenses involved, and being able to communicate in the lingua franca English, for example), and in the destination choices of touring bands. It is easier to recoup travel costs while touring in richer countries, but some poor countries have a high level of cultural capital, so are desirable touring destinations, even when doing so at a financial loss – Indonesia is an increasingly prominent example of this. The relationships between different 'national' punk contexts is also evident in international compilation and split records (see Appendix 3) and coverage of local scenes in international zines such as *MaximumRockNRoll*, *Profane Existence*, *Artcore* etc. For example, even after the incident in Banda Aceh of December 2011 brought Indonesian punk to the forefront of international attention, a survey of the content of these zines reveals that economically advantaged South East Asian neighbours such as Malaysia and Singapore still received far more mentions than Indonesia, which has a *far* larger scene than either of these places.[184]

In one of the few interviews with Indonesian bands to appear in any international zines, Esa from Zudas Krust identified some of the issues mentioned above. The interviewer, Shane Hunter, asked: 'Indonesia has many punk bands and what seems to be a very active and healthy punk scene, but there is not a lot of interest in these bands outside of Southeast Asia. Is this a fair comment? Why do you think this might be?' Esa replied:

[183] See: Kirsty Lohman, 'Dutch Punk with Eastern Connections: Mapping cultural flows between East and West Europe', *Punk and Post-Punk*, vol. 2, no. 2, (2013), pp. 147-163; Kevin Dunn, 'Never mind the bollocks: the punk rock politics of global communication,' *Review of International Studies*, vol. 34, supplement S1, (January 2008), pp. 193-210; Alan O'Connor, 'Punk and Globalization: Spain and Mexico,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, (2004), pp. 175-195

[184] The mentions that are made of Indonesian punk include: *MaximumRocknRoll* - #351 August 2012 review of a Straight Answer record, #353 October 2012 reviews of the Proletar/Greber split and the KontraSosial/Warstruck split, #356 January 2013 reviews of The Majestic, the Total Anarchy/Fucktard split, and 'No Man's Land' Oi! compilation, #355 review of Zudas Krust [misspelled as *Judas* Krust] *Here Lies Your Gods* tape, #359 April 2013 features a centrefold photo spread with gigs from across Indonesia, #361 June 2013 review of Total Banxat *When The Death Comes True* cassette, #362 July 2013 review of Salah Cetax zine, #365 review of Zudas Krust's *Dogs of Doomland* record and an interview with Zudas Krust, #372 review of Milisi Kecoa's split EP with Malaysian band Pusher; in *Ploppy Pants* #10 an article about Injakmati; and in *One Way Ticket To* Cubesville #14 a review of Zudas Krust's *Here Lies Your Gods* cassette.

> Yes, it is. We have hundreds of punk bands, have lots of labels, zines, etc. And yeah, I agree with you, there is not a lot of interest in Indonesian bands outside of Southeast Asia. I think there are two factors that contribute to this. One is our own internal problem, which is that most of us here don't communicate in English. Some of us can understand basic English, and only a few can communicate proficiently in English. So there is a language barrier that prevents us from getting involved in the international hardcore/punk scene, because the international hardcore/punk scene uses English as its universal language. Second, the external problem: lack of international hardcore/punk solidarity, or the simple lack of open-minded punks. It is hard to get involved in the international hardcore/punk scene or to communicate with friends or bands from Europe or the USA knowing that we come from a far-far away land called Indonesia. I have found some stubborn punks who think that their scene is the best, or their band is big, so they don't care to answer my emails or messages, knowing that because I come from Indonesia, I will not boost their popularity. I call it elitism![185]

The elitism Esa identifies is a real danger in academic research into 'other' cultures too – whether in Indonesia, Poland, or even peripheral areas of the UK.[186] The insider positioning in a global punk community is often outweighed by the outsider status in terms of local social and cultural aspects. A critical engagement with the ideas laid out in Edward Said's *Orientalism* warns against the tendency within Western academia for simultaneous reification and denigration of 'exotic' cultures, and encourages vigilance against retrenchment of imperialist or neo-colonialist relations.[187] Said also warns against '[s]elf-affirmation' of researchers' preconceptions and presumptions, and emphasises 'understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis.'[188] This approach is also crucial in recognising the importance of unexpected research information, and as such sits well with the inductive theory construction of Grounded Theory Method. Said's considerations also fit neatly with the anarchistic position of the research, as he champions:

> the right of formerly un- or mis-represented human groups to speak for and represent themselves in domains defined, politically and intellectually, as normally excluding them …

[185] Shane Hunter, interview with Zudas Krust, *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 365, (October 2013), n.p.
[186] See: Russ Bestley, 'From "London's Burning" to "Sten Guns in Sunderland",' *Punk & Post Punk*, vol. 1, no. 1, (2012), pp. 41-71
[187] Said, 'Orientalism Reconsidered,' p. 91
[188] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003 [1978]), p. xiv

> Orientalism reconsidered in this wider and *libertarian* optic entails nothing less than the creation of new objects for a new kind of knowledge.[189]

This speaks to the issues identified in the literature above, and dovetails with the Grounded Theory Method's emphasis on 'giving voice,' but also contributes to a methodology which is sensitive, democratic and non-exploitative.

- *Thick description to abstract analysis*

Charmaz emphasises the importance of 'thick description,'[190] as associated with Clifford Geertz,[191] and Strauss and Corbin also include this as a key aspect of Grounded Theory Method. '[A] thick context of descriptive and conceptual writing'[192] is the basis of the case study chapters (2, 3, 4, and 5) in this thesis, which Charmaz argues provides 'solid material for building a significant analysis. Rich data are detailed, focussed and full. They reveal participants' views, feelings, intentions, and actions as well as the contexts and structures of their lives.'[193] In addition to carefully detailing the narratives and reflections of the interviewees, attention is also paid to the vibrancy and lived experience of the punk scenes. This is most apparent in the 'gig vignettes' which serve to open each case study focus chapter. These are composite experiences, drawing on several gigs to create a representative gig experience (in as much as this is even possible) which anchors the readers' attention in the central aspect of all punk scenes, the gig,[194] and reminds that punk is a colourful and exuberant culture – and fun to be a part of.

While 'strict' Grounded Theory Method limits itself to developing '*mid-range* theory,'[195] this thesis goes on to build this thick description into abstract theory. As Charmaz puts it: 'We can make concerted efforts to learn about participants' views and actions and try to understand their lives from their perspectives. Yet we do not necessarily adopt or reproduce their views as our own; rather we interpret them.'[196] Gordon quotes Avner De-Shalit to make this same point:

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[189] Said, 'Orientalism Reconsidered,' p. 101, [emphasis added]
[190] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, p. 23
[191] Clifford Geertz, 'Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight,' *Daedalus*, (1972), pp. 1-37
[192] Strauss and Corbin, 'Grounded Theory Methodology,' in *Strategies of Inquiry*, p. 278
[193] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, p. 23
[194] Sometimes referred to as 'a show' in North America, and also to some extent internationally.
[195] Bryant and Charmaz write: '[GTM] should produce mid-range theories grounded in the data.' (Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz, 'Introduction. Grounded Theory Research: Methods and Practices,' in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, p. 6). This is an aspect which Glaser also emphasises (though Strauss and Corbin do not).
[196] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, pp. 33-34

> In order to be not only interesting but also relevant, [De-Shalit] argues … 'the philosopher should not take the value of the activists' claims for granted; their intuitions, arguments, claims, and theories should also be scrutinised. However, the fact that they need to be critically examined does not affect the main point: that the activists' intuitions, claims, and theories ought to be the starting point'[197] … By bringing the (often conflicting) views of activists to a high level of articulation, the theorist can construct a discussion where the activists' debates can be undertaken in a more precise and clear way, with attention to detail and a coherent thread of argument.[198]
>
> [W]hich are then fed back into the ongoing dialogue within the anarchist movement.[199]

The final chapter here (Chapter 6) picks up the key tensions identified in the case studies and analyses them in detail, to construct interpretive abstract theory which speaks to wider issues in anarchism and punk, and around relationships between politics and culture more widely.

So the methodology here is reflexive, sensitive, democratic, non-exploitative, *and* rigorous, analytical, and critical. Grounded Theory Method is drawn-upon, and where the methodology deviates from 'strict' Grounded Theory Method it does so in ways which are consistent with the anarchistic approach of the research generally.

- **Overview of structure**

This introduction has explained how the three imagined audiences (Anti-punk Anarchists, The Academy, and Anti-academic Punks) are to be addressed, and the importance of doing so.

The thesis will now move into thick description of the case study contexts. This begins with a chapter which introduces, describes and analyses the historical emergence of punk in each context, as relevant to its associations with anarchism, and provides a contemporary snapshot of the relationships between punk and anarchism in each locale (Chapter 2). The UK, Poland, and Indonesia offer three quite distinct contexts, but there is remarkable similarity in the historical emergences of punk, and the types of anarchist activism with which the punk scenes there engage – anti-fascism and animal liberation/vegan activism are two which are explored in some detail, and

[197] Avner De-Shalit, *The Environment Between Theory and Practice*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 29-31
[198] Gordon, *Anarchism and Political Theory*, PhD thesis, p. 12
[199] Ibid. p. 17

the theme of politicisation is also given a good deal of attention. From this, the key tensions which run through the thesis already emerge strongly – but they do so in complex and interesting ways.

The thesis then moves onto three case study foci (Chapters 3, 4, and 5), examining the UK with particular attention to sexism and feminism, examining Poland with particular attention to squatting, and examining Indonesia with particular attention to religion and repression – though each of these sections also make extensive use of comparison between the case study contexts. These chapters also include the gig vignettes, leading into thick description of the processes of DIY in each context. The close case study foci bring out a series of tensions once again – which echo the 'lifestylist'/'workerist' tension, but also complicate it, pointing to a spectrum of political stances across the relationship between anarchism and punk *rather than* the simple dichotomy suggested elsewhere. The case studies section is extensive, but necessarily so, to include the full, thick description that the method requires, and to allow space to adequately give voice to interviewees. Each of the case studies offers a distinct context in which to examine the relationships between anarchism and punk, and the exploration of three case study contexts allows for comparison of phenomena in a form of theoretical triangulation.

The final chapter (Chapter 6) will expand on the tensions identified in the case studies section, looking especially at the 'lifestylist'/'workerist' dichotomy within anarchism and the DIY production politics of punk. There is a detailed consideration of Class War and CrimethInc., two anarchist groups with a close association to punk, and Murray Bookchin's vehement opposition to lifestylism is taken to task. The 'lifestylist' and 'workerist' positions are scrutinised throughout this chapter, and while holding them as straw figures for the purpose of analysis, they are ultimately shown to be fictitious exaggerations. By considering punk's DIY production politics from a 'workerist' perspective, it is shown that the 'lifestylist'/'workerist' dichotomy is false – analysis of punk's positioning across this dichotomy collapses it entirely.

CHAPTER 2 – PUNK AND ANARCHISM IN THE UK, POLAND, AND INDONESIA

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, to provide introductory overviews to the case studies, offering a brief historical perspective and description of some of the key contemporary features and dynamics of the punk scenes in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia. Secondly, to demonstrate the connection between anarchism and punk in each of the three contexts, and identify some key tensions, laying the groundwork for the more detailed analysis of this relationship in the chapters which follow. The intuitive anarchistic character of early punk is identifiable in terms of: shock tactics; hippie counter cultural influences; a reactive oppositionalism to state and societal repression; practical necessity; and disavowal of 'capital P' politics. But the thesis advanced here is that the relationship between anarchism and punk goes *beyond* a comparative similarity, to a salient connection between punk scenes and anarchist movements (or punk movements and anarchist scenes). In the UK, Poland and Indonesia the emerging early punk scenes (mid-to-late-1970s in the UK, late-1970s in Poland, late-1980s in Indonesia) were, of course, often primarily concerned with aesthetics and music, while displaying inconsistent, shock tactic politics – the swastika makes an appearance alongside the circled-A in the early scenes of all three case studies, for example. However, of far greater interest here is the close association between punk and anarchist politics that has developed, and continues to develop, in these contexts. This chapter will make extensive use of interview material to build up a picture of the overlaps between punk and anarchism, starting with a sketch of the historical connections, then shifting to focus on contemporary relationships. The predominant sites of connection between anarchism and punk are:

Fig. 2.1 – Screen-print art at InstitutA, Depok.

- anarchist lyrics and imagery in punk (see Appendix 4 and the imagery throughout)
- personal expressions of anarchist politics by punks
- punk gigs as benefits for anarchist groups
- the overlap in membership between punk scenes and particular forms of anarchist activism (especially squatting, anti-fascism and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism) and particular anarchist groups (such as Class War and CrimethInc.)

- the role of punk in politicising people towards anarchism will also be of particular interest.

Of course, the recognition of a relationship between punk and anarchism underlies this thesis. This relationship is widely recognised among participants in punk scenes and the anarchist movement, and among scholars as well.[1] For example, Sezgin Boynik writes that anarchism 'is most of the time the synonym of Punk.'[2] Craig O'Hara in his *Philosophy of Punk* asserts that '[w]hen it comes to choosing a political ideology, Punks are primarily anarchists.'[3] Mike Dines recognises the important shift from early punk to the more politically conscious punk of the 1980s onwards:

> [A]lthough anarchism was at first taken as a means of mere shock value and expression of political rhetoric encompassing an eclectic mix of symbols … it was soon transformed within certain fragments of the punk rock movement into a 'space' for a more organised form of dissent. Subsequently, anarchism was taken seriously by the newly emerging anarcho-punk scene as a means of interjecting a sense of fervent political 'self awareness' into the punk rock movement.[4]

Dylan Clarke argues the same point: 'contemporary punk has foregone these performances of anarchy and is now almost synonymous with the practice of anarchism,'[5] adding elsewhere that '[c]ontemporary punks [are] largely anarchist, anti-racist, and feminist.'[6] Anti-racism and anti-fascism will be discussed further, below, while feminism is explored in the UK case study focus A (Chapter 3). Laura Portwood-Stacer writes that:

> [t]he most direct influence on the cultural texture of contemporary anarchism is probably the punk subculture … Crass, the Dead Kennedys, *MaximumRockNRoll*, and *Profane Existence* … helped to link punk music, lifestyles, and attitudes to a whole set of political philosophies closely aligned with anarchism, *often explicitly*.[7]

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[1] As discussed in the introduction, this is not a unanimous view, with the likes of Dick Hebdige, Stewart Home, David Muggleton, and Stacy Thompson all attempting to pin other politics onto punk.

[2] Sezgin Boynik, 'On Punk in Turkish,' in *Türkiye'de Punk ve Yeraltı Kaynaklarının Kesintili Tarihi 1978-1999. [An Interrupted History of Punk and Underground Resources in Turkey 1978-1999]*, Sezgin Boynik and Tolga Güldall (eds.), (Istanbul: BAS, 2007), n.p. Excerpts available here - http://www.turkiyedepunkveyeraltikaynaklarininkesintilitarihi.com/sezgin-boynik-on-punk-in-turkish.php [accessed 11th March 2016]

[3] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 71

[4] Dines, *An Investigation into the Emergence of the Anarcho-Punk Scene of the 1980s*, PhD thesis, p. 253

[5] Dylan Clarke, 'The Death and Life of Punk, The Last Subculture,' in *The Post-Subcultures Reader*, David Muggleton and Rupert Weinzierl (eds.), (Oxford: Berg, 2003), p. 230

[6] Dylan Clark, 'The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine,' *Ethnology,* vol. 43, no. 1, (2004), p. 31

[7] Laura Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics and Radical Activism*, (New York/London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 15, referencing O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk* and Thompson, *Punk Productions*, [emphasis added]

Fig. 2.2 – Logo of 'Anarchistic Undertones' record label, as taken from the *And You Call This Civilization* compilation co-released with Pumpkin Records (2010).

Pilkington, Kosterina and Omelchenko note that punks are often also involved in anarchist activism, writing that '[m]any punks … share anarchist ideas and are members of political communities.'[8] Punk is also widely understood as an invigorating force for a previously moribund anarchist movement. Kevin Dunn 'contends that anarcho-punks are currently important in reviving and sustaining anarchism as a political way of being.'[9] Rich Cross, likewise, considers that 'punk rock … provided a key impetus for [the] revival' of 'British anarchism's resurgence,' (which he argues had faltered by the 1970s). Süreyya Evren Türkeli (a.k.a. Süreyyya Evren) argues that the connection flows in both directions, pointing to the influence of punk on anarchism, but also the influence of anarchism on punk, 'in "crosspollination," while punk brings a social dynamic to anarchism, anarchist activism brings a new energy to punk music for experimenting with forms.'[10] Cross, however, qualifies his description of the relationship between punk and anarchism, saying that punk's role was '[p]erhaps surprising' and that 'the punks who raised new anarchist banners of their own making were quickly revealed as in pursuit of *very different goals*.'[11] O'Hara, also provides qualification to his assertion of a connection between anarchism and punk, as he writes: 'This is not to say that all Punks are well read in the history and theory of anarchism, but most do share a belief formed around the anarchist principles of having no official government or rulers, and valuing individual freedom and responsibility,'[12] so already the relationship between anarchism and punk is revealed as being complex. Erik Hannerz's investigation into punk scenes in Sweden and Indonesia raises another important complication, finding that

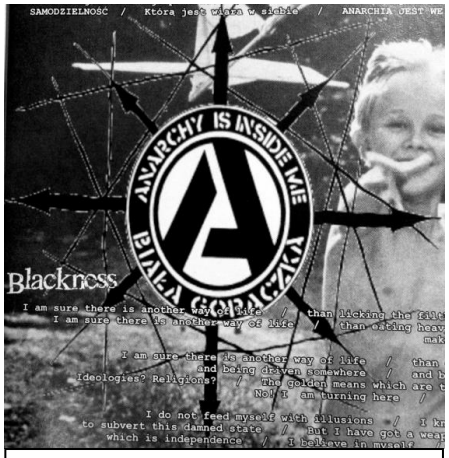

Fig. 2.3 – Anarchist imagery in the booklet of Fever – Biała Gorączka's album, *Spokój*, (Pasażer, 2003).

[8] Hilary Pilkington, Irina Kosterina, Elena Omelchenko, 'DIY Youth Groups in Saint Petersburg Russia,' *Groups and Environments* (*Grupės ir aplinkos*), no. 2, (2010), p. 139
[9] Dunn, 'Anarcho-punk and resistance in everyday life,' *Punk and Post-Punk*, p. 201
[10] Süreyya Evren Türkeli, *What is anarchism? A reflection on the canon and the constructive potential of its destruction*, PhD Thesis, Loughborough University, (2012), p. 182
[11] Rich Cross, '"There Is No Authority But Yourself": the individual and the collective in British anarcho-punk,' *Music & Politics*, vol. 4, no. 2, (summer 2010), n.p., available at: http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp/9460447.0004.203/--there-is-no-authority-but-yourself-the-individual?rgn=main;view=fulltext [emphasis added]
[12] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 71

'what punks defined as anarchism, politics, DIY … differed significantly among participants.'[13] So, while a connection between anarchism and punk (or even a 'punk-anarchism') is widely recognised, it is qualified as being somehow different from other anarchisms, and even then there is no unanimously shared understanding of anarchism that is shared by all punks. As stated in the introduction, this is only to be expected. Anarchism and punk are amorphous, ill-defined entities. The challenge is not to identify a 'true' conception of either of these, or to isolate one aspect of their relationship as being definitive, but to embrace the complexity that surrounds them. Proudhon's interpretation of antinomy offers a philosophical underpinning for this approach, which at the same time recognises the anarchist*ic* quality that is intrinsic to punk.

Complicated as it is, the relationship between anarchism and punk is clearly evident in each of the three case studies – UK, Poland, Indonesia. Taking each in turn, the instances of overlap and connection between punk and anarchism in each context will be described and explained, with a focus on anti-fascist and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism. The main purpose here is to forcefully demonstrate the depth and spread of the connections between anarchism and punk. The tensions and complications raised here will be examined in more detail in the chapters which follow.

UK

- **Historical overlap between anarchism and punk in the UK**

The punk scene of the mid-to-late-1970s in the UK has been extensively researched and written about almost since its inception. It is argued[14] that this emerging early punk scene *was intuitively anarchistic*, even while it lacked the extensive connections to the anarchist movement and more explicit anarchist political underpinning which characterises punk from the 1980s onwards. In brief, this can be identified in five main ways: adoption of 'anarchy' as a shock tactic to project a dangerous and alluring posture; hippie and avant-garde counter cultural influence, and the anarchistic threads therein; an oppositional anarchism, as a reaction to attempted repression of punk by the state and wider society; a DIY practical necessity, taking over the means of cultural production because of an *initial* lack of mainstream music industry interest; and disavowal of political parties, as well as rejection of the predominant 'alternative' political groups of the time, such as the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) or the neo-Nazi National Front (NF). However,

[13] Hannerz, *Performing Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 74
[14] See also: Jim Donaghey, 'Bakunin Brand Vodka: An Exploration into Anarchist-Punk and Punk-Anarchism,' *Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies*, no. 1, (2014), pp. 138-170

despite the identification of anarchistic qualities in early punk, the politics of this early scene generally were quite diffuse and inconsistent, and quickly became plagued by commercial and corporate music industry interference and cooptation.

A more explicit anarchist politics in punk can be traced alongside the emergence of the 'anarcho-punk' sub-genre, which first appeared in the late-1970s, reaching a peak in the mid-1980s. Other 1980s punk sub-genres, such as UK82, hardcore or UKHC, were also frequently concerned with anarchist themes,[15] but it is reasonable to argue that anarcho-punk made the connection most explicitly (at least as far as its media-bestowed moniker is concerned). As elsewhere, punk in the UK precipitated a 'surge of popular interest in anarchism.'[16] Daniel O'Guérin[17] observes that the hundreds of bands that sprang up in the UK as part of the anarcho-punk scene created 'counter-cultural hubs which in turn began to organise within their communities in different ways.'[18] O'Guérin points especially to the influence of Crass, whom he argues 'caused a surge of interest in anarchism – taking it "out of the dusty bookshops".'[19] George McKay, also a Crass fan, argues that '[t]heir "Feeding of the 5000" was the first of a sequence of media (records, slogans, books, posters, magazines, films, actions and concerts) so complex … and so effective that they sowed the ground for the return of serious anarchism … in the early

Fig. 2.4 – Disc of Icons of Filth, *Not On Her Majesty's Service*, (Mortarhate, 1982).

[15] Michelle Liptrot writes that 'the sentiments of UK82 bands were compatible with their more overtly left-wing/anarchist counterparts (particularly on issues such as the state, police oppression and nuclear war).' However, she continues that '[a] clear difference … was that whilst Crass was making a "concerted attempt to work through the nihilistic archetypes of the time" … UK82's "anarchy and chaos punks" … were occupied with retaining this aspect of 1970s punk.' (Michelle Liptrot, '"Different people with different values but the same overall goals": Divisions and unities within the contemporary British DIY punk subcultural movement,' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 2, no. 3, (2013), p. 215, citing Savage, *England's Dreaming*, p. 481, and Glasper, *The Day the Country Died*. This 'difference' is overstated, and based more on aesthetic concerns than in any genuine ideological or political divergence. As Liptrot argues elsewhere herself, and as is echoed here, participants within the anarcho-punk sub-genre are often as guilty of vague posturing around anarchism as those in the UK82 or UKHC scenes.

[16] From the blurb for *The Day the Country Died: A History of Anarcho Punk*, Roy Wallace (dir.), (2007), available at http://fuckcopyright.blogspot.com/2009/04/day-country-died-2007.html [accessed 20th June 2012]

[17] This is the pseudonym of a contributor to Back2Front zine based in Northern Ireland, playing on the name of the French anarchist/Marxist writer Daniel Guérin.

[18] Daniel O'Guérin (Back2front zine), 'What's in (A) song? An introduction to libertarian music,' in *Arena Three: Anarchism in music*, Daniel O'Guérin (ed.), (Hastings: ChristieBooks, 2012), p. 15

[19] Ibid.

1980s.'[20] Penny Rimbaud of Crass celebrates his own contribution to this reinvigoration, noting: '[a]t that time [late-1970s, early-1980s] the circled A was rarely seen outside the confines of established and generally tedious small-time anarchist literature … Within a few years they had spread world-wide.'[21] He has argued that 'within the sort of canon of anarchism [Crass have] made a huge contribution of *redefining* it on all sorts of different levels.'[22] Several of the interviewees in the UK (Jack, Ryan, George, Jon, Adam) were involved in the anarcho-punk scene and with anarchist activist groups in the 1980s, and agreed that anarchism was hugely significant in punk. Jack remembered that 'Conflict gigs were like anarchist meetings … they did actually feel like anarchist gatherings, more than any other kind of gig you went to.'[23] However, Jack problematised the 'anarcho' in anarcho-punk:

> I think there was hardly any of the anarcho-punk bands that would have said that they were in any way 'capital P Political.' And you'll see that a lot of them, at the time, kind of didn't engage in discussions about anarchism. And when they did, it was often in a very very vague kind of way. Right? So they were more concentrating on what they were actually doing on the ground, which to a greater or lesser extent was squatting, it was animal rights and animal liberation, and it was stuff around … anti-fascism and things like that.

Animal liberation and anti-fascist activism will be discussed below, while squatting is the focus of case study B on Poland (Chapter 4). George agreed with Jack's problematisation, saying:

> I think it was a general *sort of* anarchist thing. Punk and anarchy … are very problematic I think. The way I understand anarchy is probably through bands like Crass, which isn't … a very articulated thing. Anarchy, when you get away from music, it becomes, y'know, more defined.[24]

[20] George McKay, *Senseless Acts of Beauty: Cultures of resistance since the sixties*, (London: Verso, 1996), p. 81
[21] Rimbaud, *Shibboleth*, p. 109
[22] 'Penny Rimbaud, key artist in the British anarcho-punk movement and prime mover behind the band Crass, in conversation with Prof George McKay, University of Salford,' panel at the Society & Lifestyles: Subcultures & Lifestyles in Russia & Eastern Europe Conference Organised by the University of Salford & the University of Central Lancashire, 4th-6th December, 2008, University of Salford, video available at: http://193.219.173.117/flash/Rimbaud-confer.html [emphasis added]
[23] Interview conducted 14/08/2013
[24] Interview conducted 24/11/2013, [emphasis added]

Fig. 2.5 – Lost Cherrees logo, taken from *Hung Drawn and Quartered*, (Anti Society, 2012).

Jack said he had wished 'anarcho-punk would kind of politicise itself almost, or have a kind of reform of its politics, but nobody seemed to be leading that, expect maybe to some extent Conflict.' In Jack's consideration, to be 'anarchist' in the 1980s anarcho-punk scene meant 'you had to act in a certain kind of way … It was more really about your ideas, and your political interventions in things,' which echoes Portwood-Stacer's emphasis on the punk 'cultural texture' of contemporary anarchism, above. But even if punk's connection to anarchism is questionable or complicated, Adam was clear that his politics was *not* associated with the wider leftist movement or then-popular variations of Leninist-Marxism. He said, 'when I started talking about politics I was definitely an anarchist, not a communist. I don't mind the latter these days as descriptive word, but at the time [1980s] it was just "nah, that's Stalinism, fuck that."'[25] Rimbaud has also been vocal about Crass's opposition to 'the Left' as much as 'the Right,' saying, 'we vigorously avoided any kind of alliance with left, right or centre.'[26] While instances of punk engaging with other ideologies and politics are fairly numerous[27] this clearly places anarcho-punk and related sub-genres in explicit association with anarchism, and not a wider 'Leftism.' Pete Dale makes the point of punk more widely, arguing (lamentingly) that:

> [s]ince the 1970s, traditions of punk have brought forth various subsequent new-sense micro-scenes. Many of these have encouraged a certain degree of political agency, but few have been socialistic let alone Marxist; on the contrary, *an explicitly anarchistic orientation has been the dominant tendency*.[28]

So even those who would wish it otherwise recognise the close association between punk and anarchism, to the extent that it is clearly the predominant and preeminent political association with punk (even if Dale fundamentally misinterprets anarchism as being 'contrary' to socialism).

[25] Interview conducted 28/08/2013
[26] 'Penny Rimbaud, key artist in the British anarcho-punk movement and prime mover behind the band Crass, in conversation with Prof George McKay, University of Salford,' panel at the Society & Lifestyles Conference
[27] Even to the extent of associations with far right and fascist politics, as will be discussed below.
[28] Pete Dale, *Anyone Can Do It: Traditions of Punk and the Politics of Empowerment*, PhD thesis, ICMuS, Newcastle University, (2010), p. 185, [emphasis added]

- *Historical punk activisms in the UK*

As Jack mentioned above, squatting, animal liberation, and anti-fascism are forms of anarchist activism that were (and are) associated with punk. Jon described the connection between anarcho-punk and political activism in his life: 'we were doing stuff which [was] obviously inspired, like I was, by the anarcho-punk thing. And one of the guys, the guy I went breaking McDonald's with and that kind of thing, he was very much inspired by y'know Flux of Pink Indians and … the Mob, and stuff like that.'[29] Ryan listed a range of activisms with which he was involved:

> Zines was my thing really. I mean I was involved in everything, quite big in the Squatters Support Network, and Anarchist Black Cross,[30] basically anybody who was out on strike, we were out … supporting them, so obviously on picket lines and things. Anti-uranium mining, anti-sectarianism … we were highly politicised.[31]

From the interviews, squatting emerges as a key theme, along with anti-corporate/animal liberation activism against McDonald's, and prisoner support work. It is also of particular interest that support of industrial actions and workers' struggles is also mentioned, which contradicts the 'workerist' accusation of punk as being solely concerned with 'lifestylism,' as raised in the introduction, and which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. George pointed to the importance of 'peace politics' and anti-nuclear campaigning:

> [P]eople would talk about like anarchy and peace and freedom and things, even though anarchy and peace don't necessarily go together, but just as a response to the political climate at the time, back of the Falklands war and so on … [P]eace was quite big, as a protest. CND was massive as well.

He also stressed the animal liberation connection, saying, 'I think if punk was … affiliated with anything politically it was animal rights. And, again we're talking about very different times … the late-1980s, the Animal Liberation Front were kind of very active.' Jon listed the variety of activisms that characterised the anarchist/punk overlap in the 1980s and 1990s, saying, 'it wasn't just hunt sabbing[32] … there was going to the nuclear bases, going to Upper Hayford, and going to Greenham Common … and of course the anti-fascist stuff, and then there was the … Public Order Act … Those kind of demos, and then … some anti-McDonald's stuff.' Alastair Gordon writes that 'anarcho punk was chiefly concerned with the anarchist politics of liberation, solidarity and challenging social

[29] Interview conducted 19/09/2013
[30] Anarchist Black Cross is a prisoners' support network for incarcerated anarchists and other activists.
[31] Interview conducted 08/10/2013
[32] Hunt saboteuring or hunt sabotage.

oppression … vegetarianism, animal rights, anti-war and anti-globalisation achieved through … DIY politics.'[33] So punk has historically been associated with a wide range of activisms, from 'lifestyle' politics such as squatting and veganism, to environmentalism and anti-nuclear campaigning, to picketing alongside strikers and doing prisoner support – but as Gordon makes clear: 'its chief status is *countercultural*.'[34] So the general recognition of punk as being associated with 'lifestylist' anarchism has some bearing, but it is far too simplistic to assert, as some 'workerists' do, that punk is *exclusively* associated with 'lifestylism.'

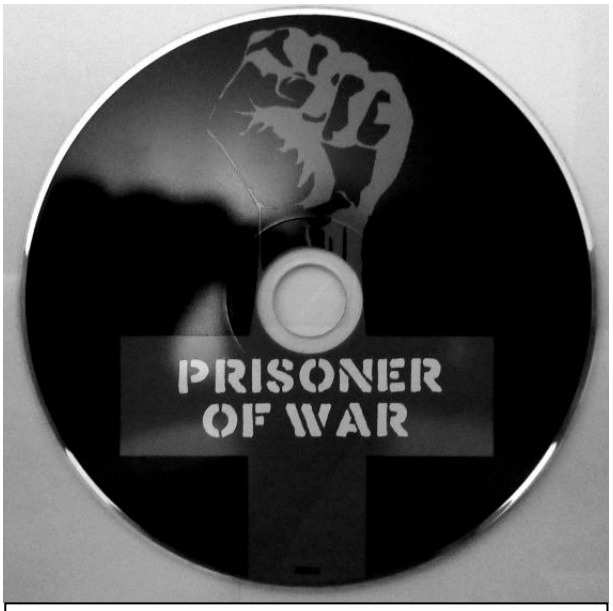

Fig. 2.6 – Anarchist Black Cross logo on the disc of *Prisoners of War,* benefit compilation (POW, 2011).

- *Overlapping memberships between punk scenes and the anarchist movement in the UK*

This political connection is manifested in an extensive overlap between the participants of punk scenes and anarchist activist groups. Ryan discussed those activisms that were populated predominantly by punks: '[I]n terms of animal rights, almost exclusively punks. In terms of going onto picket lines and y'know supporting strikes and stuff like that, mixed, always mixed. The Anarchist Black Cross was almost exclusively punks as well, and the squat was kind of a bit of mixed, mixture of kind of all sorts.' Jack talked about the 'enormous crossover at that time, undoubtedly' with 'the mainstream anarchist movement … The political anarchist movement, Class War for example, or Anarchist-Communist Federation. I mean, there were a lot of anarcho-punks in it frankly.' The Class War Federation, and especially its *Class War* newspaper precursor, was repeatedly mentioned by interviewees when discussing the relationship between punk and anarchism in the 1980s and early-1990s. As Jack said:

> There were a hell of a lot of punks in the early Class War … Yeh, the first conference I went to, in Manchester, the founding conference in '86, there was a lot of kind of punky dudes there, right? There was a lot of people that had heard of Crass Records. I would say

[33] Gordon, *The Authentic Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 222
[34] Ibid.

> if you did a poll, everybody there would have had a Crass record at some point in their lives, maybe with the exception being Ian Bone and Martin Wright.[35]

Jon echoed the connection with Class War: 'one of the guys who was involved in our group was very into *Class War*, and so he used to get the kind of *Class War* paper, I even sold *Class War* sometimes with him.' Adam speculated on *Class War*'s appeal to punks:

> I think the likes of Ian Bone 'n' all would claim that it was designed specially to attract a certain working class milieu … trying to get *Sun* readers on board with something more radical. But it was really, I would say, more effective then in appealing to punks. And they did get quite a lot, y'know, a lot of punks I knew would have read it.

In fact, *Class War* founder Ian Bone was explicit about the desire to attract punks, drawing on the 'embryonic political movement'[36] which Crass had helped to form. He writes that '[f]rom the plastic As of *Anarchy in the UK*, Crass had given the circle As real political meaning.'[37] However, Bone criticised Crass's emphasis on peace, arguing that 'their influence had become reactionary … The time was right to produce a paper aimed at the Crass anarcho-punks and soon after the first [*Class War*] paper hit the streets.'[38] *Class War*, especially in its early issues, utilised an aesthetic reminiscent of punk zines. Punk also frequently featured in its content, for example an early issue from late-1983 reports on a Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) march of October that year during which 'CND stewards were pushed aside … Bottles hurled at the stage … The police resisted … An inspector knocked to the ground,' and crucially '[a]mong those taking part were Class War, London Autonomists,

Fig. 2.7 – Class War punk compilation tape, *Inside for Us, Outside for Them*, 'For Class War prisoners,' (Filthy Tapes, c. 1990s)

[35] It should be noted that Ian Bone did play in the band Living Legends, who played alongside Crass at least once, so Bone could also be considered a 'punk participant.'
[36] Ian Bone, *Bash the Rich. True-life confessions of an anarchist in the UK*, (Bath: Tangent Books, 2006), p. 119
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid. Also quoted in O'Guérin, 'What's in (A) song?' in *Arena Three: Anarchism in music*, p. 18

Roseberry Ave. punks, + Crass.'[39] The anarchist-punk 1in12 Club in Bradford is mentioned in another *Class War* issue from around October 1984,[40] and an issue from around April 1985 features a newspaper clipping reporting on a demonstration at the royal horse trials:

> Punk gang in a royal punch-up … [A]nti-hunt demonstrators yesterday burst into the arena in front of the Queen at the Badminton horse trials. She looked angry and turned away from the demonstration which marred her 59th birthday. One woman and nine men, most in punk-style clothes and with spiky or skinhead haircuts were involved.[41]

As Jack mentioned above, punks also populated the Class War Federation which emerged from the *Class War* newspaper. As Bone notes:

> The Class War collective … included … Streatham Action Group: Punky serious animal liberationists led by pink-haired vegan Chris with autonomous Asian girl pose [*sic*] … [and] Molly's Café Squatters: Tim Paine and Spike brought a load more punky squatters into the group including a smattering of anarcha-feminists.[42]

This quote emphasises the eclectic anarchist activist interests of punks, coming together under the banner of Class War Federation (and the stress on class struggle suggested by that moniker), but with explicit connection to 'lifestyle' activisms such as animal liberation and squatting – this is explored in more detail in Chapter 6. Punk participation in organised anarchist groups, or readership of particular publications, was not limited to Class War Federation and *Class War* paper. Adam also pointed to '*Green Anarchist* [which] definitely had a more punk aesthetic, sorta animal rights/punk aesthetic.' Adam was also a member of an anarcho-syndicalist group in Belfast called Organise! (which has since become a branch of Solidarity Federation), and recalled that during the late-1980s and early-1990s 'punk certainly fed into [Organise!], or people who were influenced by punk became members of it.' So punks were, and are, to be found as participants in a *wide range* of anarchist activist groups.

[39] *Class War*, (c. late 1983). Not numbered, not dated, [emphasis added]
[40] *Class War*, (c. October 1984). Not numbered, not dated
[41] *Class War*, (c. April 1985). Not numbered, not dated
[42] Bone, *Bash the Rich*, p. 180

- *Anarcho-punk protest in the UK*

Another repeated theme in the interviews was the Stop The City protests of 1983 and 1984, which were characterised by the interviewees as an example of explicitly anarcho-punk protest. Jack recalled the scene:

> It was actually called by London Greenpeace, but Crass were definitely involved in it, made videos and stuff like that. And certainly at the first one, the very early Class War was there … So it was a confluence, a coming together of various different kind of tendencies or whatever, rather than anybody's particular project … I mean if you want to see anarcho-punks *en masse*, it was like that … It was fantastic, I'm just getting flashbacks like now … I mean it was scary, it was so scary. There was something like, I think 520 were arrested in a demonstration of probably about 1500 to 2000, so every other person was getting lifted, or it felt like it … *[I]t felt like going to an enormous anarcho-punk gig*. I remember seeing Attila the Stockbroker[43] there actually, he was just one of the people in the crowd. There was a definite kind of mass feeling. It felt that we were actually doing something that could actually, again it's naïve, but actually make a difference … Class War stuff was in the air slightly. But mostly, it felt a kind of [an] anarcho-punk, anti-militarist, pacifist thing, and there was certainly no aggro, apart from the police, right?[44]

The 'Class War stuff' is evident in Jack's description, but rubs alongside an anarcho-pacifist strain as well, typified by Crass and London Greenpeace. In any case, direct action and property damage were the tactics of choice. Jack also recalled that the Stop The City protest was extended by small-scale actions across the UK, in Jack's case by carrying out low-level vandalism against corporate targets with a group of punks in Coventry. Ryan viewed that 'certainly by the mid-1980s … [punk] was considered by the state to be a threat. It was the Stop The City marches in 1983 and 1984 which brought London to a standstill and cost the City y'know £6 million plus each time.' One of Alastair Gordon's interviewees, named Mr. S, described Stop The City as: 'an ethical meeting ground for people. An arena for protest that was outside of the punk concert, this helped to strengthen the UK network of anarcho punk along common ethical lines of concern.'[45] Gordon also notes that the:

> Stop the City actions were just one of many acts of refusal bolstered by the anarcho punk networks. CND benefit concerts and marches, hunt saboteuring, direct action animal

[43] Attila the Stockbroker is a punk poet associated with anarcho-punk.
[44] [emphasis added]
[45] Gordon, *The Authentic Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 117

> rights protests, prisoner bust funds in addition to the picket support of the miners' strike of 1984/5, were all political activities mentioned by the participants.[46]

Benjamin Franks points to punk's:

> participatory approach [being] overtly championed by the ecological activists in events such as the land occupations in Wandsworth (Pure Genius site), Wanstead, Pollock and Newbury. These unmediated experiments involved significant numbers of libertarians and have been represented as anarchic moments.[47]

Ryan argued that anarcho-punks' involvement in other political issues of the time pointed to a connection that 'was more than just a … buzzword, or a fashion side of things.' He gave examples of wider political issues that anarcho-punk was particularly engaged with:

> what was going on at Stonehenge as well, highly politicised, the Miners' strike y'know, and a lot of the bands y'know in England were talking about this. But they were also talking about what was going on in Northern Ireland, which was music to our ears because the rest of the world didn't seem to know. So this was one of the other things that made anarcho-punk, in particular, attractive.

The numerous 'histories' of UK punk which screech to a halt in 1979, as discussed in the introduction, ignore the massively heightened sense of oppositionalism that the Thatcher regime provided. As Gordon points out: 'the miners' strike and the heavy tactics of Thatcherite policing provided visible targets for the new punk counterculture scene to protest against.'[48] Dines emphasises the importance of this, writing that:

> if the punk movement's increasing political awareness could be explained by the notion of theoretical anarchist thought being introduced to the fore, then there is no doubt that another key aspect towards this awareness was the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979.[49]

Gordon suggests that the inception of the anarchist 1in12 Club in Bradford was based on 'collectively organised volunteers banded together *in the face of Thatcherist attacks* on trade unions, the working classes and the unemployed to form a model and legacy that set and linked DiY punk and

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[46] Ibid.
[47] Benjamin Franks, *Rebel Alliances. The means and ends of contemporary British anarchisms*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2006), p. 121, referencing McKay, *Senseless Acts of Beauty*
[48] Gordon, *The Authentic Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 117
[49] Dines, *An Investigation into the Emergence of the Anarcho-Punk Scene of the 1980s*, PhD thesis, p. 145

anarchist principles as the cornerstone of their actions.'[50] Jack echoed the importance of the target for kick-back that Thatcher represented. He went as far as to say:

> I think Thatcher was, in a sense, a god-send. I think if you had [Michael] Foote in, there would have still been the oppositional and all the rest of it, but not anything like the kind of intensity … with the sort of profound sense that here was somebody who was openly a class warrior, that wanted to basically impose her class's particular will on another class. And that was … a really strong sense. And of course, she was also like a classic kind of figure of … hatred, and there might even have been an element of misogyny in there I think … And Cameron, and indeed Blair before him have continued that tradition, that political trajectory, but … she was a revolutionary, undoubtedly. Y'know, she was something we hadn't really seen before, and she had her equivalent in America with Reagan.

Perhaps circumstantially, Thatcher's ousting in 1990 coincided with a general downturn in the UK punk scene – with the 1990s being described by punk historian Ian Glasper as 'a soulless vacuum,'[51] 'much-maligned … an absolute nadir in the history of UK punk.'[52] As mentioned in the introduction, Glasper dedicated three volumes to documenting the 1980s, and just one to the 1990s (which carries the subtitle *How UK punk survived the nineties*). However, this logic would have it that John Major's government represented an improvement over Thatcher's – which is a *highly* dubious claim at best – and while punk in the UK might have experienced a relative lull during the 1990s, this experience is not borne out in the US, where the departure of Bush senior (former vice-President to Thatcher's bosom-buddy, Reagan) coincided with '[t]he d.i.y. boom of the mid-1990s'[53] (and huge interest from the corporate capitalist music industry in punk as well). And of course, as Glasper writes, 1990s punk in the UK was 'united [in their] anger and frustration felt towards … the government and the authorities,'[54] just as it had been in the 1980s. Punk culture in the UK in the 2000s was relatively healthier than in the 1990s, but it is doubtful that the premiership of Tony Blair did *anything* to nurture that. The influence of 'top-down' political narratives over counter cultures and oppositional politics is certainly questionable. Whatever trough UK punk went through in the

[50] Gordon, *The Authentic Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 145, [emphasis added]
[51] Glasper, *Armed With Anger*, p. 11
[52] Ibid. back cover
[53] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Rolling Thunder: an anarchist journal of dangerous living*, no. 7, (spring 2009), p. 72
[54] Glasper, *Armed With Anger*, p. 11

1990s, it probably had less to do with the demise of the Thatcher regime than it did with the normal ebb and flow of punk culture across the world, and the emergence of the rave scene in the UK.[55]

So, punk has been connected very clearly with anarchism in the UK. Several interviewees and scholars have even claimed that punk reinvigorated the anarchist movement of the late twentieth century. To re-state, this not to say that all anarchists were punks, or that all punks were anarchists, but the connection is very salient, and highly influential over the wider anarchist movement and punk scene, representing the strongest political association with punk. This connection remains hugely significant in the contemporary UK punk scene as well, as it has grown from these historical roots.

Fig. 2.8 – Edge of the Lardarse, *live tape*, (Fluff, 1996).

- **Contemporary overlap between anarchism and punk in the UK**

Interviewee Katie described her anarchism in straight-forward, if individualistic, terms, as: 'freedom! That's the main thing. It's freedom to be what you want to be. It's freedom to interpret things the way you want to and not go by whatever it is that other people … force upon you.'[56] However, the connection between punk and anarchism goes beyond a shared rhetoric of liberation to a much more salient overlap. With similarity to the historical context described above, squatting, animal liberation, and anti-fascism are the predominant anarchist activisms still commonly associated with punk today – though *not exclusively so*. Liam, discussing the contemporary punk scene, echoed the emphases described in the historical recollections above: 'The biggest range is the like working-class Oi! sort of y'know, grassroots anti-fascism, to the krusty libertarian animal rights viewpoints.'[57] Anarchist activist groups are still often populated by punks, as Adam said:

> in terms of punk and anarchism, there's still an interest there. It's not only from people who are into a sorta punk lifestyle or into the punk scene. But we can't bullshit about this – there are a disproportionately high number of people who are attracted to anarchism who come from that sorta punk or anti-racist skinhead sorta subculture.

[55] See: George McKay, *DiY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain,* (London: Verso, 1998)
[56] Interview conducted 23/12/2013
[57] Interview conducted 06/10/2013

In Adam's estimation: '*at least half* of the people that have ever been involved in Organise! and SolFed, here [Belfast] anyway, I would suspect in England as well, have been involved in some sort of punk or related subculture.' Jack echoed this: 'you see a lot of old punks in the IWW [Industrial Workers of the World], so people that have been through that experience of anarcho-punk and all the rest of it end up maybe in things like anarchist political organisations.' Organise! was, and Solidarity Federation is, explicitly *anarcho-syndicalist*, while the IWW also has a close association with libertarian and syndicalist union organising – so while this kind of class struggle and worker-focussed activism is not recognised as being predominant among the activisms associated with punk, it is nevertheless a common point of overlap. Younger interviewees, with no direct experience of the punk scenes or anarchist movement of the 1980s and 1990s, also recognised the connection. As Megan said, 'there'll always be a massive, massive ground for the two to overlap,' but qualified this saying, 'I don't think that they're necessary for each other.'[58] She continued:

Fig. 2.9 – *The Now or Never Sound Endeavour*, punk compilation benefit for Norwich Anarchists, (c. 2008).

> Y'know it's nice when they are [together], and it's nice to have the support from both sides, y'know. Music's a great way to unify people and to get them to be like listening and paying attention to a particular issue, particularly if they've never been exposed to the ideas before. But … there's no rule that says you have to be an anarchist to be a punk. You can be a Sex Pistols fan I guess [laughs].
>
> So I think it [anarchism] would be poorer [without punk] and I think … the benefit [gigs] wouldn't happen for a start … that's where a lot of people come to it.

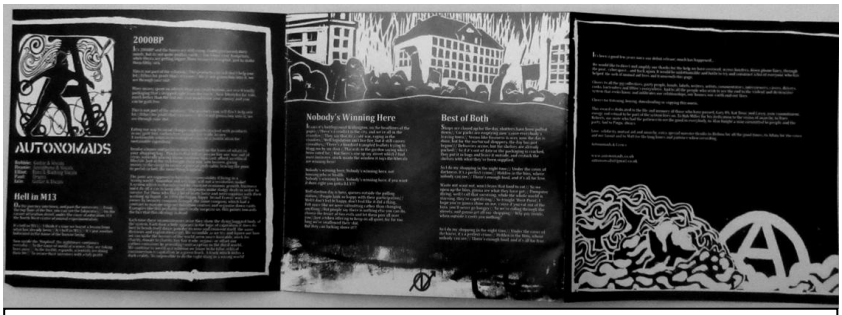

Fig. 2.10 – CD booklet: Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective, *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011).

[58] Interview conducted 17/12/2013

So, while Megan recognises that anarchism and punk can (and do) operate separately from one another, she also points to the importance of punk for politicising people (which will be explored below), and to the importance of benefit gigs. Benefit gigs are a material connection between punk and anarchism, in which punk events raise awareness and funds for a particular anarchist cause, protest, or group. As O'Guérin points out, punk benefits for anarchist causes have a long history, with 'anarchist-punk groups despite their unresolved political arguments and counter-arguments help[ing] to fund many ongoing radical activities.'[59] Crass funded numerous projects and groups, such as London Greenpeace[60] and released a benefit single with Poison Girls 'Bloody Revolutions/Persons Unknown' in 1980 for five anarchists who were facing trumped-up terrorism charges in court,[61] with the remainder of the money going into the short-lived Anarchy Centre in London.[62] Class War's 1988 Rock Against the Rich initiative, which consisted of 'gigs in towns and cities all over the country, each one highlighting the working class struggles in that particular area,'

Fig. 2.11 – *Population Against Corporation. The Front Cover Archives* compilation (benefit for the Shell To Sea campaign), (Front Cover Productions, 2008).

to 'support these communities and workers physically, politically and financially in their resistance,'[63] also featured several punk bands, and headlined 'ex-Clash singer Joe Strummer.'[64] Class War

[59] O'Guérin, 'What's in (A) song?' in *Arena Three: Anarchism in music*, p. 18, quoting Bone, *Bash the Rich*, [page number not given]
[60] O'Guérin, 'What's in (A) song?' in *Arena Three: Anarchism in music*, p. 15
[61] See: Stuart Christie, 'The "Persons Unknown" Case – Order in the Court,' *City Limits*, (January 1980), available at http://www.christiebooks.com/ChristieBooksWP/2015/03/the-persons-unknown-case-order-in-the-court-stuart-christie-city-limits-january-1980/ [accessed 24th March 2016]; *Black Flag*, vol. 5, no. 10, (September 1979), available at http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC511_scans/Black_Flag/511.BlackFlag.vol.5.No.10.1979.pdf [accessed 24th March 2016]; and *The Persons Unknown*, Gordon Carr (dir.), (1980), available at https://www.fandor.com/films/the_persons_unknown [accessed 24th March 2016]
[62] George Berger, *The Story of Crass*, (London: Omnibus Press, 2008), p. 169
[63] *Class War*, c. 1988. Not numbered, not dated. The article continues: 'In North Wales R.A.R. will be supporting villagers resisting the takeover of their areas by holiday homes for the rich; In South Wales R.A.R.

rekindled their Rock Against the Rich gigs in 2015, to raise funds for their Class War Party candidates standing in the General Election, again featuring numerous punk bands. Other benefits that have occurred in recent years include gigs for antifa groups, Food Not Bombs chapters, and Faslane anti-nuclear camp. Other interviewees discussed benefit gigs as well. Katie plays with a band and she mentioned playing gigs at the Occupy camp of winter 2011/2012 at St. Paul's Cathedral in London 'quite a few times … we played twice, but we used to go down and hang out and talk to people there, which was brilliant … I really loved that. Really, really invigorating.' Sonia discussed a gig in London which was a 'benefit going for FRIEND,[65] it's an animal rescue sanctuary in Kent, and … I know there was one antifa gig a few months back, and the money went … to the parents of one of the Russian activists who got killed. So it's like, yeh, to support things.'[66] Tommy, who helped organise the social that followed the 2013 London anarchist bookfair, explained that the previous year's bookfair social had been a benefit for the 1in12 Club in Bradford.[67] Oisín, who plays with a band in London, said:

> it's kinda nice when we can play a benefit, when we actually know what's goin' on like … when it's close to us … I'm actually helping to put a benefit on for the Faslane Peace Camp up in Scotland, 'cause I really sort of support what they do … they just need some money to get them through the winter.[68]

However, he also suggested that the fact that a gig is a benefit doesn't always resonate with all those attending:

> [S]ome people are conscious about it, some people just wanna go out and watch the band, 'cause they like the band. Generally, if I'm looking at a flyer, benefit gig for whatever, I kinda look more to see who's playing, what the bands are doing first, y'know. 'Cause if all the bands are shite I probably won't go, y'know. If there's a couple of good bands playing, yeh that'll be a good night out, y'know. I'll go along, and I'm quite happy to pay my money to get in for whatever benefit it goes to.

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will support local communities involved in robbing coal trains – repossessing what their own class dug from the ground in the first place; In Doncaster there will be a benefit for sacked miners, and in Dover for sacked P&O workers and their families. In towns like Liverpool, Birmingham, Hull, Southampton, Newcastle and East London, where inner city and dockside areas are being Yuppified, local people engaged in fightback against the Tories' Urban Development Corporations will be supported.'

[64] Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business… the politics of Class War*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1992), p. 168

[65] F.R.I.E.N.D. Farmed Animal Rescue, http://www.friendanimalrescue.org.uk/ [accessed 11th March 2016]

[66] Interview conducted 20/09/2013

[67] Interview conducted 19/10/2013

[68] Interview conducted 19/10/2013

So, while the material significance of raising money for a particular cause remains, the symbolic or propagandistic aspect is somewhat questioned here. Nonetheless, punk benefit gigs for anarchist related groups or causes are extremely prevalent, as will be discussed further, especially in the gig vignettes and discussions of DIY in action in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

As well as a connection through benefit gigs, anarchist groups are also often invited into punk gigs to distribute (or 'table') literature. Mark Wallis of anarcho-punk band Liberty recalled the importance of tabling anarchist material in the 1980s:

> [W]e felt that at our concerts we wanted to more than just play … So we linked up with organisations such as Class War, and when we was at our concerts they would put on stalls around, and give out literature as well. So something that was influenced to say, that when the concerts playing and the band's playing as well, you can have some leaflets and some political message can also get out to people and they can read that message.[69]

Jack particularly pointed to US band Strike Anywhere's insistence on inviting anarchist groups to gigs during recent UK tours:

> [If any contemporary band] identif[ies] with anarcho-punk, it's them, Strike Anywhere. You see the lead singer [Thomas Barnett], he's fucking brand new. I mean he proactively seeks out anarchists wherever he goes and says 'you must run a stall.' And then he comes down and speaks to you and he's totally genuine.

So benefit gigs and tabling literature represent a material connection between punk scenes and organised anarchist groups, which is perhaps all the more pertinent since it occurs within the context of gigs, which are a central focus point for punk scenes.

As in the 1980s and 1990s, contemporary punk in the UK is also closely associated with anarchist activisms. Anti-fascist and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism are predominant among these, and will be discussed here, but squatting and feminism are also key themes which will be explored in the case study foci which follow.

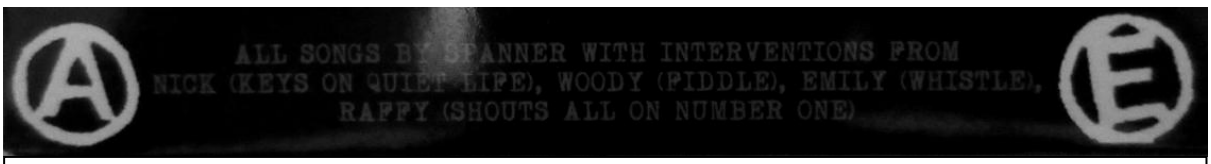

Fig. 2.12 – Detail from CD booklet of Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011).

[69] Mark Wallis of Liberty interviewed in *The Day the Country Died*, Roy Wallace (dir.)

- *Punk and anti-fascism in the UK*

As mentioned already, anti-fascism is a key concern in contemporary UK punk, and anti-fascist imagery and rhetoric are extremely prevalent (see Appendix 5, part A).[70] Adam said that '[a]ntifa is a thing that alotta people in the punk scene and sorta anti-racist skinhead scene associate themselves with … Punks were running about with antifas patches on all the time.' M. Testa, in his history of anti-fascism in the UK, notes that 'there was always a contingent of punks and dreadlocked members visible out on "manoeuvres"' with anti-fascist militant groups such as Red Action and Anti-Fascist Action (AFA),[71] as evidenced by his interviewee 'Matt,' who 'like many in the AFA ranks, had come from the anarchist/punk scene.'[72] As Stanislav Vysotsky notes: '[t]he anti-fascist movement has extremely strong roots in Punk and Skinhead subcultures.'[73] Antifa, as mentioned by Adam, is the predominant contemporary manifestation of militant anti-fascist activism. In the UK, it emerged from previous militant groups such as Anti-Fascist Action via the No Platform group. The distinctive antifa tactics and black-bloc aesthetic originate from the Autonomist movement in Germany, and while Autonomism is a variant of Marxism rather than anarchism, it is, as Vysotsky writes: 'anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, feminist, and anti-statist,'[74] so has very strong similarities and numerous shared political positions with anarchism. As such antifa has become easily compatible with contemporary anarchist activism, and has been predominant in the UK since the mid-2000s.[75] Anti-

Fig. 2.13 – Anti-Nazi patch in the UK.

[70] Strike Anywhere, the American band Jack mentioned, have for several years been using the anti-fascist symbol of a circle enclosing three downward pointing arrows as a recurring motif. This symbol originated in 1930s Germany as the logo of the Iron Front, and was supposedly designed to easily cover Nazi swastikas.
[71] M. Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism. A Hundred Years of Resistance*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2015), p. 229
[72] Ibid. p. 276
[73] Stanislav Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' *Interface: a journal for and about social movements*, vol. 5, no. 2, (November 2013), p. 272, citing: Ian Goodyear, 'Rock against Racism: Multiculturalism and Political Mobilization, 1976-81,' *Immigrants & Minorities*, vol. 22, no. 1, (2003), pp. 44-62; Ryan Moore and Michael Roberts, 'Do-it-Yourself Mobilization: Punk and Social Movements,' *Mobilization: An International Journal*, vol. 14, (2009), pp. 273-291; and Robert T. Wood, 'The Indigenous, Nonracist Origins of the American Skinhead Subculture,' *Youth and Society*, vol. 31, (1999), pp. 131-151
[74] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 272
[75] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 297

racism in general has had a long association with UK punk, going right back to the Socialist Workers' Party's front organisation the Anti-Nazi League, and the Rock Against Racism (RAR) gigs in 1978.[76] Anti-fascist blogger M. Testa writes that 'RAR used a distinctive star in a circle symbol with the DIY/cut-and-paste graphics of early punk and presented a fresh, exciting aesthetic, immediately appealing to young music lovers, students and punks,'[77] and that, '[c]rucially, several influential punk musicians aligned themselves against the NF [National Front] and with the ANL … Many punks supported Rock Against Racism (RAR)/ANL simply because their favourite bands expressed sympathy.'[78] As a result, 'RAR manag[ed] to combine popular anti-racism within the punk discourse,'[79] which has persisted through punk's development, even while the Trotskyist SWP abandoned their efforts to woo the early punk scene while attempting 'to shake off the "throw a brick" reputation (which many punks and others found to be the most attractive aspect).'[80]

This emphasis on anti-racism and anti-fascism is necessary because 'despite their claims to antiracism, [punk and skinhead are] identified with whiteness,' [81] and as such 'white supremacists have managed to develop a foothold within these subcultures.'[82] In the UK, fascist forays into the punk scene began with the National Front's 'Rock Against Communism' gigs, organised in 1979 in direct response to Rock Against Racism. This spawned the 'White Noise Club,' which by 1987 eventually coalesced into 'Blood & Honour.' The organisation of Blood & Honour was subsequently taken over by the neo-Nazi group Combat 18 by 1993. M. Testa writes that:

> [a]t first the White Noise and Blood & Honour bands seemed to be a continuation of the Oi! music genre, without the commercial appeal or the backing of the music press [ie. Gary

[76] These early overtures from the Marxist-Leninist/Trotskyist left towards punk were abandoned by the 1980s. See especially: Matthew Worley, 'Shot By Both Sides: punk, politics and the end of "consensus",' *Contemporary British History*, vol. 26, no. 3, (2012), pp. 333-354
[77] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 198
[78] Ibid. p. 197
[79] Ibid. p. 205. Matt Worley discusses the National Front's efforts to woo and infiltrate early punk in the UK: Worley, 'Shot By Both Sides,' pp. 333-354. See also: Roger Sabin, '"I Won't Let That Dago By": Rethinking Punk and Racism,' in *Punk Rock: So What?*, pp. 199-218
[80] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 201
[81] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 272, citing: Ruben Ramirez-Sanchez, 'Marginalization from Within: Expanding Co-cultural Theory Through the Experience of the *Afro Punk*,' *The Howard Journal of Communications*, vol. 19, (2008), p. 89; and Daniel S. Traber, 'L. A.'s "White Minority": Punk and the Contradictions of Self-Marginalization,' *Cultural Critique*, vol. 48, (2001), pp. 30-64
[82] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 281, citing: Chip Berlet and Stanislav Vysotsky, 'Overview of U.S. White Supremacist Groups,' *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 34, (2006), pp. 11-48; Randy Blazak, 'White Boys to Terrorist Men: Target Recruitment of Nazi Skinheads,' *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 44, (2001), pp. 982-1000; Mark Hamm, *American Skinheads: The Criminology and Control Of Hate Crime*, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*; and Wood, 'The Indigenous, Nonracist Origins of the American Skinhead Subculture'

> Bushell]. They specialised in unmelodious thrash, bad punk stripped to its basics with extreme, racist and fascist lyrics, and recordings festooned with neo-Nazi insignia.[83]

However, even from this very earliest manifestation of fascist punk, 'Blood & Honour gigs were always discretely publicised and held in obscure places in case anti-fascists located the venue to disrupt it or get it cancelled.'[84] So, in addition to opposing fascism on ideological grounds, anti-fascist activists view fascism/racism/white supremacism 'as direct political opposition … recruiting within the same political base.'[85] Vysotsky writes that, as a result of this:

> Punks and Skinheads have been at the forefront of developing a strong opposition to white supremacists because they pose an immediate threat to the subculture broadly and to the physical safety of its members. The physical spaces that are crucial for subcultural activity — bars and other music venues, music stores, and other locations where Punks and Skinheads 'hang out'— become the literal battlegrounds for a conflict over the ideological orientation of the subculture.[86]

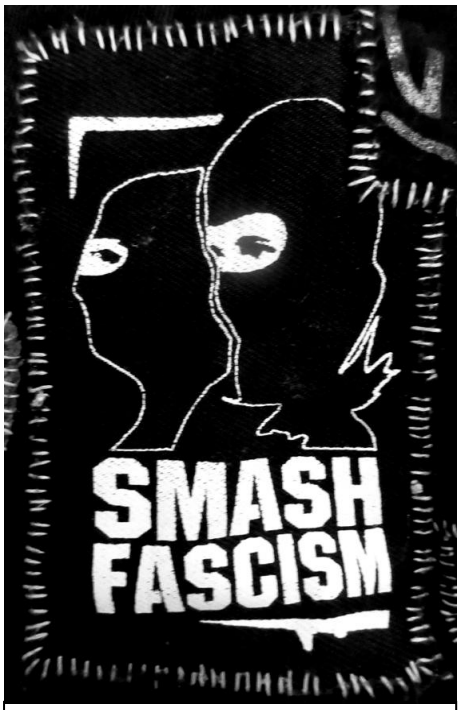

Fig. 2.14 – Anti-fascist patch in the UK.

Oisín's band are associated with anti-fascism, playing numerous benefits for antifa groups and including anti-fascist themes in their lyrics. Oisín said that he has 'always had an antifa stance, because like growing up around here [Kilburn] … when I was a kid you were either black or you were Irish pretty much,' and viewed that London's melting pot of ethnicities and cultures ('everyone's from everywhere else') meant that 'most bands in London, like most of the bands we play with anyway, they're all very sort of … anti-fascist, anti-racist sorta thing.' He said, 'we're quite happy to be tagged as an anti-fascist band, 'cause we are,' but also noted that their association with antifa meant that the band appeared on the white-nationalist/fascist website 'Redwatch nearly every other week,'[87] which he described as 'a

[83] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 241
[84] Ibid. pp. 241-242
[85] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 278, citing Don Hamerquist, 'Fascism and Anti-Fascism,' in *Confronting Fascism: Discussion Documents for a Militant Movement*, Don Hamerquist, J. Sakai, Mark Salotte (eds.), (Chicago, Illinois: Arsenal, 2002), pp. 15-69
[86] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 281
[87] Redwatch publishes pictures (and sometimes addresses and contact information) for suspected 'Reds,' which includes anti-fascists, anarchists, Marxists, anti-racist campaigners, etc. in an effort to intimidate activists: http://www.redwatch.co.uk/index2.html [accessed 13th March 2016]

who's who of your friends. It's like a family photo album.' Megan noted that for the last number of years the Brighton punx picnic has been scheduled specifically to coincide with English Defence League (EDL)/March for England (MfE) rallies, with efforts made on 'Friday and Saturday [of the picnic] encouraging people to come out on the Sunday [for the counter-demonstration].' She said, 'the lads and girls that do punx picnic, it's really important to them to do that. 'Cause they'd all be on the demo anyway, so they're just trying to get more people there.'[88] Oisín suggested that Nazi 'punk' gigs, such as those organised by the Blood and Honour group/label, 'might' occur 'out in the fucking land of suburbs, like in Ilford or something like that, where they'll have some shitty little pub,' but that people 'wouldn't generally know about it, y'know, apart from their own little scene.' And echoing M. Testa's point above, he was also quite clear that Nazis would not be tolerated in central areas of London: 'I mean if a Nazi band went to play in Camden, there'd be a riot, d'y'know what I mean? Well maybe not a riot, but more of a massive beating for them fucking dicks. 'Cause people wouldn't stand for it.' Liz also discussed anti-fascism, mentioning that while her band were playing at the anarchist Cowley Club in Brighton, 'the evening was punctuated by phonecalls from drunken EDL members threatening to come down to the venue for revenge'[89] after a Cowley Club member had punched EDL leader Tommy Robinson in the face. She said that 'at the Cowley gig some of those there were genuinely excited at the prospect of the EDL turning up on their home turf so that they could have an opportunity to beat them up,' but Liz was critical of this mentality, arguing that:

Fig. 2.15 – Details from cover of Doom, *Rush Hour of the Gods*, (Flat Earth, 1996).

> that kind of thing [doesn't do] anything to further any political debates, other than firmly entrench the ideas that are held on both sides … I'm a bit too much of a fluffy pacifist to deal well with this kind of thing … If that's what they wanna do, I'll leave

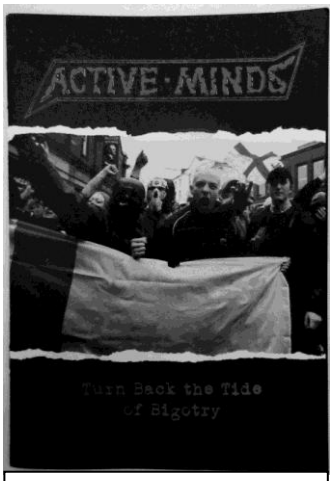

Fig. 2.16 – Cover of booklet in Active Minds, *Turn Back the Tide of Bigotry*, (Active Distro, 2012).

[88] M. Testa writes about this as well: 'The MfE [March for England/EDL]'s return to Brighton [in 2013] saw a handful assembled at the [sea] front surrounded by hundreds of anti-fascists – locals, UAF [Unite Against Fascism, SWP front organisation], black bloc, anarchists, trade unionists and a large group of punks from the Punx Picnic that was taking place that weekend.' (Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 315)

[89] E-mail addendum to interview conducted 18/12/2013

them to it – but it's not a side of anarchism that I'll ever get involved with myself.

So while the perception of anti-fascist activism is by no means uniform across the punk scene, it remains a prevalent force, and is a clear expression of anarchist activism associated with punk.

- *Punk and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism in the UK*

Animal rights/liberation[90] and veganism is another key anarchist political concern in UK punk. As Julie Sylvestre puts it: 'Veganism is a powerful way of "living and breathing" Punk,'[91] and that '[a]lthough Veganism is not the ubiquitous dietary practice of Punks, it is a popular expression of resistance within the movement, and serves as a tool of critique.'[92] This connection has its roots in the 1980s, as interviewee George put it: 'UK hardcore and animal rights went hand-in-hand.' Alastair Gordon notes the importance of animal liberation themes in anarcho-punk, which he argues first emerged:

Fig. 2.17 – 'Vegan Bike Punk' sticker produced by Active Distro.

> on the *Stations of The Crass* record [1979] with the track 'Time Out' where comparisons are made to human and animal flesh. Animal rights became a central ethical theme over the next decade … [T]here were numerous anarcho records voicing animal rights issues such as the promotion of vegetarianism, anti hunting and anti vivisection themes.[93]

Ryan pointed to the importance of animal liberation in the Belfast punk scene of the 1980s, saying that 'animal rights was always a very very key type of thing. But it was one of the things that, for me, it became almost too exclusive … *it came at the top* of all the people's chains.'[94] This emphasis

[90] 'Animal rights' commonly stands-in as a catch-all term for animal advocacy activism, including those explicitly animal liberationist activisms which in fact reject liberal rights frameworks in favour of anarchist analyses of exploitation and oppression.
[91] Julie Sylvestre, 'Veganism and Punk – A Recipe for Resistance: Symbolic Discourse and Meaningful Practice,' *Ottawa Journal of Religion*, vol. 1, (2009), p. 91
[92] Ibid. p. 90
[93] Gordon, *The Authentic Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 112 (footnote 31). He lists examples as 'Flux of Pink Indians (1981) *Neu Smell* ep and the track 'Sick Butchers'. Conflict (1982) *It's Time To See Who's Who*, (1983) *To a Nation of Animal Lovers*; Amebix, (1983) *No Sanctuary* ep. Subhumans (1983) *Evolution* ep; Antisect (1983) *In Darkness, There Is No Choice*, in particular the track 'Tortured and Abused'.
[94] [emphasis added]

on vegan and vegetarian consumption choices extends to twenty-first century punk scenes as well. A 'Punk Rock Census' compiled by *Last Hours* zine 'found that 54.6 percent of respondents were either vegan or vegetarian, compared with less than 3 percent of the general population.'[95] Zines also have a key role in illuminating animal liberation and vegan consumption issues, and it is often the case that individuals' first exposure to in-depth discussion of animal liberation is found within them, with zines providing vegan recipes, interviews with bands and activists, reviews of benefit gigs and records for animal liberation causes, and articles about the philosophy and history of animal liberation and veganism. It is also the case that social centres in the UK that are associated with punk and anarchism are usually (almost exclusively) vegan, including 'the Warzone Centre in Belfast, the Cowley Club in Brighton, the Sumac Centre in Nottingham, the 1in12 Club in Bradford … Kebele in Bristol.'[96] Liam, who is actively involved with Warzone in Belfast said, 'we do operate a vegan café, which obviously results in discussion and opportunities for anyone who maybe wouldn't have eaten anything vegan before to come and eat it and realise it's fucking nice [and] a lot better for ye than the crap that people eat.' The centrality of animal liberation themes in punk means that numerous animal activist groups and food sovereignty campaigns are populated by punks, including chapters of Food Not Bombs and Hunt Saboteur groups. The chair of the Hunt Saboteurs Association is quoted as saying 'there's always been that push within the punk movement to support animal rights, and because *the punk movement is by its very nature anarchist* – they push towards organisations like us and not the more [mainstream] organising groups.'[97] Jon recalled the overlap of animal liberation activism and punk in the 1980s: 'It was hunt sabbing during the day and then punk rock at night … We used to go hunt sabbing … and then we'd [find out] "right, where's the gig" … 'cause the van was hired for 24 hours, so we [would] go to a gig anywhere.' Ryan remembered

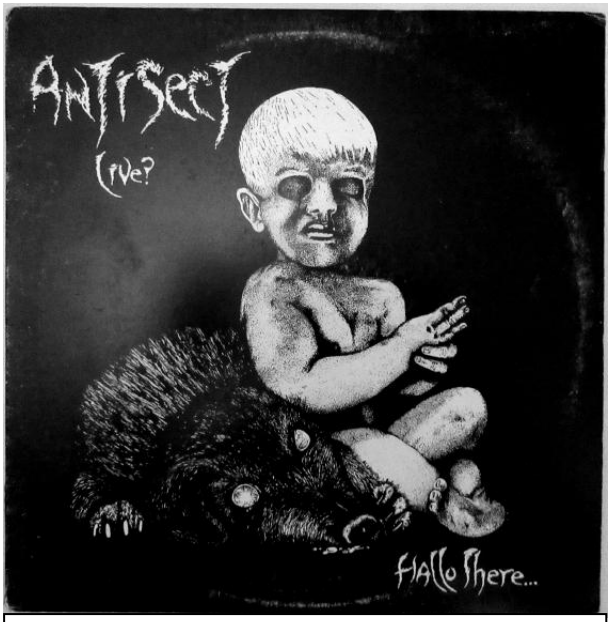

Fig. 2.18 – AntiSect, *Hallo there… How's Life?*, (Graven Image, 1991).

[95] *Last Hours*, #13, (summer 2006), 'punk rock census' and 2012 Department of Health and Food Standards Agency (FSA) - National Diet and Nutrition Survey, available at https://www.vegsoc.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=753 [accessed 11th August 2014], cited in Len Tilbürger and Chris P. Kale, *'Nailing Descartes to the Wall': animal rights, veganism and punk culture*, (London: Active Distribution, 2014), p. 6
[96] Tilbürger and Kale, *'Nailing Descartes to the Wall*,' p. 9
[97] Ibid. p. 10, [emphasis added]

that animal liberation activist groups in the 1980s were made-up of 'almost *exclusively* punks,'[98] emphasising the pervasiveness of this connection.

So animal liberation activism and vegan consumption are a key political preoccupation within UK punk, and this relationship is most sensibly understood as an intersectional opposition to all forms of domination *in conjunction with anarchism*. Indeed, while veganism can (and sometimes is) adopted simply to fit in with the norms of punk culture, it is generally the case that 'Punks who practice Veganism are those who adhere to an ideology of *anarchism*, animal and human rights, ecological well being, etc.'[99] As Pilkington, Kosterina and Omelchenko note '[t]he ideas of equality and non-discrimination in the sphere of culture, music and information are extrapolated … into an ideology of anti-discrimination action and views such as the protest against racism, xenophobia and homophobia *and the protection of animals*.'[100] The prevalence of veganism and animal liberation activism within punk scenes provides another strong connection with anarchism.

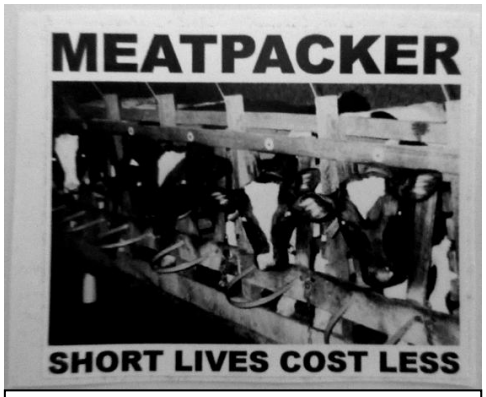

Fig. 2.19 – Meatpacker sticker.

Fig. 2.20 – Details from the CD booklet of Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008).

[98] [emphasis added]
[99] Sylvestre, 'Veganism and Punk,' p. 95, [emphasis added]. There are issues here with anarchism being described as an ideology, and the conflation of anarchism with rights based analyses, rather than animal liberation.
[100] Pilkington et al, 'DIY Youth Groups in Saint Petersburg Russia,' p. 137, [emphasis added]

- *A sense of decline in UK punk?*

Despite the continuing overlap between punk and anarchism, several of the older interviewees who had been involved in the anarcho-punk scene considered that the contemporary connection is not as strong as that of the 1980s. As Jon put it:

> The anarchist punk thing is definitely way smaller and way less influential than it used to be, the numbers are less. The seriousness [with] which the politics are taken by most bands is a lot less than it used to be. A lot of the kind of like anarcho-punk … ethos, the kind of community kind of thing has gone, and it's been diluted … There used to be a thing whereby you knew that some gigs … if anarcho-punks were organising it, or anarcho-punk bands were playing it, then they would be pretty much … free of bullshit … [T]he phrase that people use nowadays is whether or not they're safe spaces I guess, and y'know if you go to see a band … one you'd think of cool, political, and they're being supported by bands which aren't … drinking bands, Sick On The Bus, that kind of shit ... bands which just kind of revel in the culture of just y'know 'being punk' and drinking and fucking abusing people and that kind of stuff, then … there's no guarantee that you're not gonna get crap, as it were. Whether it's just physical or mental.

So, as Jon describes, because the punk scene as a whole in the UK is somewhat smaller than its heyday in the late-1970s and 1980s, there is less scope for anarcho-punk or other anarchist engaged punk genres to hold events with a character distinct from less politically engaged punk scenes. Liz also pointed to this potential problem, saying, 'I think I take a lot for granted, that punks will necessarily … have some kind of identification with anarchist principles. This isn't necessarily the case.' However, she did continue that 'I've not often encountered opinions that massively contradict this, luckily.' So, while the possibility of 'getting crap' at punk gigs is perceived as higher than in the anarcho-punk heyday, it remains an uncommon experience. From the perspective of anarchist groups too, the connection with punk was viewed as being less ubiquitous than in the 1980s. Jack said, 'as a member of the Anarchist Federation, most of the young people I meet … have absolutely no experience of anarcho-punk, or punk, or anything like that, or even of that kind of like counter-culture.' He identified this as a generational issue: 'It's almost like the people that join the IWW, who have come through the sort of anarcho-mainstream, anarcho-punk and that … a lot of them are of the age where you're that punk rocker with a mortgage.' He continued:

> But are many of the people that I have met recently in the anarchist movement listening to anarcho-punk? Some people are rediscovering it and getting into like Crass and all the

> rest of it, and quite possibly some other people listen to … the modern anarcho-punk. But I don't think many, not in my experience. No, I don't think it's a major factor anymore.

So, while Jack hinted at the possibility of people getting into anarcho-punk through anarchism (as opposed to the other way around), his view was that the overlap in membership between organised anarchist groups and punk scenes was less than in previous decades. George concurred, saying, 'I still think they're two different worlds, not to denigrate either.' Even Tommy, whose engagement with punk and anarchism began in the early-2000s, was conscious of this shift in the relationship between anarchism and punk: '[It's] separate nowadays. Before I was around I think they overlapped a lot more sort of in the '80s and early-'90s. But now, nah, I don't think they do, it is separate. But y'know, times like this, [the London anarchist] bookfair and that, we meet-up.' The basic picture is of a weakened connection between anarchism and punk in the contemporary UK punk scene, as compared with the 1980s, though this does not indicate a complete separation, as negated by the numerous instances of overlap described above. Numerous interviewees in all the case study contexts discussed a sense of decline in their scenes, while other interviewees contradicted this. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be interesting to further analyse this malaise, particularly to discern whether this affects older scene participants more as their own involvement in a scene becomes less, or they become disillusioned or jaded, or if in fact it is based on an accurate perception of shifting fortunes in the scene (though how this could be quantified is questionable in itself).

Fig. 2.21 – Detail from the CD booklet of Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011).

Poland

- **Historical overlap between anarchism and punk in Poland**

The historical context of punk in Poland is, of course, markedly different from that of the UK. The punk bands and scenes which emerged in the late-1970s and 1980s did so under the Polish People's Party state-communist/Soviet bloc regime, and are held in almost mythological reverence by many people in punk scenes in Poland, and elsewhere, as a result. The interviewees in Poland understood the 1980s era as a key influence on the development of both the anarchist and punk movements, and several of the interviewees (Wojtek, Krzysztof, Kinga, and Dawid) first became involved with punk during this time. On the 'other' side of the iron curtain, these punks faced very particular challenges, especially in terms of access to resources and dealing with the limitation of expression enforced by the state censor. This was also a time of huge anti-system political engagement, and punk was closely associated with the opposition movements that culminated in the collapse of Soviet controlled state-communism at the end of the 1980s. Furthermore, this political involvement was frequently informed by anarchism.

In common with the UK, this explicit anarchist connection was not immediately manifested in early Polish punk. As interviewee Wojtek describes:

> [back in] '78/'79 [when the] first crew[s] arose … punk … appeared purely musically, right? There was no communication, so to speak, political[ly] … Early punk[s] could wear swastikas on t-shirts … It was [a] very small environment. In '80 it was certainly very small.[101]

This closely reflects the early political development of punk elsewhere at this time. Shock tactics are the key trope – if a swastika was considered to be offensive in the UK, its impact must have been much sharper in Poland, which had suffered hugely under Nazi occupation during World War II. But in contrast to the UK scene, the late-1970s period in Poland did not witness an explosion of media and mainstream interest in punk, and there was nothing comparable to the corporate selling-out of the early UK punk scene.

[101] Interview conducted 28/05/2013

- *Facilitation and repression of punk in Poland – 1980s*

Krzysztof Grabowski, drummer with seminal Polish punk band Dezerter, recalls in his memoir hearing 'some punk recordings earlier [than 1980] … on the Polish Radio III Program or on the Luxembourg Radio,'[102] suggesting that punk did have some limited penetration in Poland in the late-1970s. Wojtek points to events like the massively attended Jarocin rock festival, set up as a state concession[103] to the demand for youth culture, as significant catalysts for the Polish punk scene in the early-1980s. He said:

> only since '81 we can talk about it ... in Jarocin appeared a few punk bands, but also Dezerter [under] another name, SS20 – and here we talk about punk rock properly. *After* martial law[104] [there was a] punk rock explosion … A lot of people get involved, a lot of crews was created in '82.[105]
>
> The punk rock explosion [in] … '85 and '86 is massive.

So, while the state's provision of music festivals offered the opportunity for punks to play in bands, to meet-up and to organise, the imposition of martial law in December 1981 by General Wojciech Jaruzelski (First Secretary of the Polish Communist Party) also generated an important sense of oppositionalism for punk. Raymond Patton describes the growth in popularity of Jarocin festival as being 'particularly evident *after* martial law,' starting as 'a small event with 15 bands and a modest audience in 1980,' growing by 1982 to 'a three-day affair with 5000-7000 audience members,' and '[b]y 1983, Jarocin had grown into a week-long behemoth, with an estimated 20,000 Polish youth in attendance.'[106] In contrast Patton notes that other major festivals, catering for more traditional music, and less associated with opposition politics, such as Opole festival, were cancelled in 1982

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[102] Krzysztof Grabowski, *Dezerter. Miscarried Generation?* (trans. Jacek Trojanowski), (Warsaw: KAYAX, 2010), p. 7

[103] The festival was, as Patton writes, 'co-sponsored by the local Union of Socialist Polish Youth (Związek Socjalistycznej Młodzieży Polskiej, or ZSMP).' (Raymond Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry: the music business in 1980s Poland,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 47, no. 2, (2012), pp. 438-439). See also: Grzegorz Piotrowski, 'Jarocin: a free enclave behind the Iron Curtain,' *East Central Europe*, vol. 38, no. 2-3, pp. 291-306

[104] Raymond Patton writes that the declaration of martial law 'closed the presses, banned the Solidarity labour movement, and reversed the liberalisation that had come with its success.' (Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 427). Patton also quotes Michael Bernhard, who writes that martial law 'temporarily disrupted the reconstitution of civil society by withdrawing legal recognition of the actors in the public space, and by attempting both to liquidate almost all independent organisation and to collapse the public space.' (*The Origins of Democratization in Poland: Workers, Intellectuals, and Oppositional Politics, 1976–1980*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993))

[105] [emphasis added]

[106] Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 438, [emphasis added], referencing: Urszula Biełous, 'Woodstock w Jarocinie,' *Polityka*, no. 29, (1982); Rafał Szczesny Wagnerowski, 'Bania z festiwalami,' *Non Stop*, (October 1982)

'due to Poland's financial woes,'[107] illustrating that Jarocin's oppositional energy was key to its massive popularity. The tension between facilitation and repression of punk by the state in Poland in the 1980s is evident in the recording and release of the first Polish punk record, by Brygada Kryzys in March 1982. As Patton writes: '[i]t is one of the ironies of the Polish scene that after martial law, one of the first bands to be silenced was also one of the first to record an album.'[108] Garczewski and Garczewska write that Brygada Kryzys found themselves in 'many disputes with authorities' because of the 'direct opposition with the system through many of the lyrics,' which 'finally resulted in a concert ban leading to dissolving the band.'[109] But despite being 'one of the most troublesome bands,' Brygada Kryzys 'recorded an album in Tonpress – a recording studio controlled by the state,'[110] producing what Patton describes as 'a classic of Polish punk rock.'[111] Dezserter too made their first recording with the state-run Tonpress in spring 1983,[112] despite facing harassment from the security forces and state censor.

Punk gigs were also facilitated by the Polish state and groups associated with the Communist Party. As Patton writes: 'the concert often cited as the first punk show in Poland … took place in Riviera-Remont, a Socialist Union of Polish Students (*Socjalistyczny Związek Studentó w Polskich*, or SZSP) club,' with other punk gigs happening in 'Hybrydy – another SZSP club in Warsaw.'[113] Jarocin festival was associated with the Union of Socialist Polish Youth (*Związek Socjalistycznej Młodzieży Polskiej* or ZSMP) and 'the Kołobrzeg new wave festival (1980) – now remembered as a legendary early punk performance – took place at the local SZSP club as well.'[114] As Patton notes, these clubs and youth unions were 'linked to the Communist Party [and] all included clauses acknowledging the supremacy of the Communist Party in their founding documents,'[115] so these groups can be considered as elements of the extensive Polish communist state apparatus. Even in the later-1980s, while political dissent was being harshly repressed, the state continued to facilitate punk scenes. Grabowski writes that '[w]e knew in general that a band like ours [named SS-20 after the Soviet nuclear missile type] can't perform too much, simply because there were no places to play, yet *there was an opportunity* to appear in various towns.'[116] Dawid, who was involved in his local town's punk scene in the late-1980s before emigrating to London, recalled that '[t]here were *many spaces allowed for the gigs* and

[107] Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 438
[108] Ibid. p. 442
[109] Krzysztof Garczewski and Anna Garczewska, 'Sounds of the opposition – music and politics in Poland 1970-1989,' *The Journal of Kolegium Jagiellońskie Toruńska Szkoła Wyższa*, vol. 1, (2014), p. 50
[110] Ibid.
[111] Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 442
[112] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 36
[113] Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 438
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid. p. 439
[116] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 30, [emphasis added]

stuff … it was not very commercial 'cause there weren't many people listening to this music. So, we were always trying to do it like DIY style. Inviting bands from Poland and from abroad.'[117] Other early Polish punk bands include TZN Xenna, Deuter, Tilt, Armia, KSU, all of whom were able to play gigs and release records.

But despite this facilitation of 'youth culture,' and punk, gigs required permits from the authorities and the state censor, with many requests refused and some bands banned altogether, as mentioned above with Brygada Kryzys. Grabowski recalls the repression of punk gigs during martial law while playing with SS-20, writing about one gig where the ZOMO (*Zmotoryzowane Odwody Milicji Obywatelskiej* or Motorised Reserves of the Citizens' Militia) 'would enter the concert hall, pick someone from the crowd, and pull them outside by the hair or by the legs. What was going on out there I can only imagine.'[118] SS-20 were forced to change their name:

> because gig organisers spread a gossip that we have a ban on playing. No one was able to say where it started and who came up with it first but it worked perfectly. After a whole series of unsuccessful attempts to organise any sort of a gig, we broke down. Good old secret police tested ways of the operation of people's country, our 'beloved socialist fatherland'.[119]

Dezerter were also investigated by the 'Stage and Theatre Department of the Arts and Culture Ministry' in spring 1984 after news reports emerged of anti-system sentiment being expressed at a gig.[120] So, punk was facilitated to a limited degree by state-run youth culture initiatives and state-run music industry institutions, but was also subject to state harassment and censorship.

However, as Patton writes: '[c]ensorship – often taken as the key limitation in cultural production in socialist systems – indeed played a role, but its effects were less pervasive and easier to negotiate than more mundane institutional constraints.'[121] Access to resources for bands (and for the population generally) was extremely limited in 1980s Poland. Grabowski recalls cobbling together equipment for a first band practice with SS-20, using 'cardboard boxes that resonated well' for drums, 'radios and record players' as guitar amps, a 'tape recorder microphone' for vocals, and a

[117] Interview conducted 24/05/2013, [emphasis added]
[118] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 15
[119] Ibid. p. 30
[120] Ibid. pp. 40-41
[121] Patton, 'The Communist Culture Industry,' p. 431

self-made distortion pedal housed in 'a tea box.'[122] Kinga, whose own band started in the late-1980s, recalled a similar situation:

> We didn't have a place to play. It was hard to find a rehearsal room, or whatever, and there were no instruments actually. You had to construct your own drums and stuff … you were lucky if you got … a drum set or a guitar or an amplifier [laughs].[123]

So, while the direct role of the state repression was significant, wider economic factors also had an inhibitive influence on early punk in Poland.

- *Anarchism in 'early punk' in Poland*

As Grabowski writes:

> in the PRL [*Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa* or Polish People's Republic] in the 1980s, every action that wasn't controlled by the state could have been considered political. The authorities were so fearful that the society wanted to overthrow them that it tried to oversee every aspect of social and cultural life.[124]

He also states that punk in Poland was based on 'anti-communism,' but also 'was naturally leftist, but in the PRL … such leftism was considered revolutionary … There was no longing for socialism, since its clinical version was experienced by us at every step. One common point was that the system was the main enemy.'[125] So punk was heavily associated with the wider opposition movement against the Soviet-communist regime.[126] The opposition movement in Poland was a multifarious entity, comprising several critiques against Soviet-bloc communist rule: Catholic nationalism; the socialistic *Solidarność* [Solidarity] workers' movement; Situationist-inspired groups like *Pomarańczową Alternatywę* [Orange Alternative]; and explicitly anarchist groups such as *Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego* [Alternative Society Movement]. The imposition of martial law was a reaction to the increased popularity and effectiveness of these groups, especially Solidarity. Wojtek became involved with opposition groups in his youth, which for him went hand-in-hand with his involvement in punk. He said, 'I started working from '86/'87 [and got in] contact with the

[122] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 16
[123] Interview conducted 23/12/2013
[124] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 8
[125] Ibid. p. 6
[126] See also: Grzegorz Piotrwoski, 'Punk Against communism: revolting in 1980s Poland,' in *A European Youth Revolt?: Youth, Revolt and Transgression in the 1980s*, Knud Andresen and Bart van der Steen (eds.), (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 203-216

opposition Solidarity, but at the same time I was involved in the punk movement/counter-cultural [movement]. I went to concerts of famous punk bands [such as] Dezerter, Armia.' Dezerter were explicitly anarchist, as they expressed in interviews, their lyrics, and in their imagery.[127] In an early song titled 'Anarchia' (the lyrics for which were written in 1981) they sing 'Anarchy, freedom and peace. Anarchy puts everyone at rest. Anarchy will solve your problems. Anarchy is what we want.'[128] Wojtek was also involved in organised anarchist groups:

> [T]here was one group with whom I had contact, called *Wolność i Pokój* [Freedom and Peace], and this … group [was] comprised [of] people associated with the counterculture, and there were also many punk rockers, hippies and it was a group of colour[ful] anarchist counter-cultur[e], but not purely anarchist.

So cultural activism and 'Political' activism were part of the same wider movement as far as Wojtek was concerned, echoing the overlaps described in the UK context. Wojtek helped to form an activist group in Warsaw in 1987, taking inspiration from the anarchist Alternative Society Movement in Gdańsk with whom he had been in contact. The group they formed was 'totally … associated with the punk movement, here with the Warsaw punk scene. For meetings and the first [street protests] … with black flags, some student protests or something. [Of those] coming 99 percent were punks.' Grzegorz Piotrowski concurs that:

> the development of social activism in Poland since the 1980s … was linked to counter-culture and subculture for many years. The rebirth of Polish anarchism, for instance, happened simultaneously with the development of the punk-rock scene.[129]

Interestingly, Wojtek recalled a lack of anarchist literature in Warsaw at the time, so the politics of their group was largely informed by 'information of Dezerter and Crass … simply translating texts [by] Crass and some leaflets.' So, in addition to punks being involved in organised anarchist groups, punk was also providing literature, propaganda and information. As discussed above, the anarchism of Crass was distinct from that of the 'mainstream' anarchist movement, so the fact that the re-emerging Polish anarchist movement was informed by Crass and similar anarcho-punk bands is significant. Jarosław Urbański characterises this 'cultural anarchism' as 'antipolitical, critical towards

[127] Grabowski, *Dezerter*, p. 16 [interview material with *Non Stop* zine in 1984], p. 39 [anarchist badge worn on stage at Jarocin festival 1983], p. 43 [circled-A t-shirt worn by the band], p. 118 [circled-A flower imagery used in 1989]
[128] Ibid. p. 213. 'Anarchia' appears on Dezerter's 1987 album *Kolaboracja*, (Klub Płytowy Razem)
[129] Grzegorz Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East: The Rozbrat Squat in Poland, 1994-2012,' in *The City Is Ours. Squatting and autonomous movements in Europe from the 1970s to the present*, Bart van der Steen, Ask Katzeff and Leendert van Hoogenhuijze (eds.), (Oakland: PM Press, 2014), p. 248

revolution and revolutionary violence, left anti-theology and being anti-communist.'[130] This, again, echoes Portwood-Stacer's description of the 'cultural texture' of anarchism, as was also discussed by interviewee Jack in the UK, and points to the 'workerist' critiques of punk as being bound-up with 'lifestylist' anarchism.

Younger interviewees were also conscious of this historical connection between anarchism and punk in the 1980s opposition movement. Kasia said, 'the struggle before … 1990 … the punk scene was really against the system. Even this … mainstream punk scene.'[131] Szymon stated it even more strongly, saying that under the:

> dictatorship of communism … over here, there [was a] big rise of the punks and anarchism also. They'[v]e been together for all those years, and still I think *there will be no anarchist movement without punks*. Like, they are still fixed together and it's hard to think [of an] anarchis[t] movement without punks … *All anarchists now they have background in punk*.[132]

However, interviewee Krzysztof warned against overstating the connection. Krzysztof, who became involved with punk in the 1980s[133] agreed that 'during the punk period, of course, [the] anarchist movement was growing together with punk,' but he made two important qualifications to this. One was that the cultural connection to the opposition movement extended beyond punk, 'like near Wrocław it was this Orange Alternative … not all of them was punks, no? Lots of artist people, and politic[s] people were anarchist.'[134] Krzysztof was also at pains to make clear that anarchism has a long historical pedigree in Poland:

> [The] anarchist movement was very strong [from] the middle of nineteenth century. It was [a] Polish anarchist which killed [the] American president,[135] no? It was Polish anarchist which killed Tsar in Russia[136] … [laughs] they were not punks … Or the work[ers'] movement in late-nineteenth century, also was pretty anarchist … and anarcho-

[130] Jarosław Urbański, 'Anarchizm – kryzys I transformacja,' *Przegląd Anarchistyczny*, no. 9, (2009), p. 100, as quoted (and translated) by Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 248. Piotrowski notes that 'left anti-theology refers to leftist dogmas and ideas that are similar to religious ones, but are anti-religious by default.'
[131] Interview conducted 15/05/2013
[132] Interview conducted 24/05/2013, [emphasis added]
[133] He showed his age by describing Post-Regiment (formed in 1986) as 'a new band.' Interview conducted 02/06/2013
[134] Interview conducted 02/06/2013
[135] Leon Czolgosz shot and killed William McKinley in 1901 in Buffalo, New York.
[136] He may be referring to the assassination of Alexander II of Russia, who was assassinated by members of Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) in 1881, including Ignacy Hryniewiecki who was born to a Polish noble family (though not actually born in Poland).

> syndicalism … before the second war also was quite strong … So, anarchism is not something which came … from Britain with punk music, OK? It was here already, no? [laughs].

This is important to bear in mind. The view of some younger participants would have it that contemporary anarchism in Poland is wholly dependent on the emergence of the punk scene. It *might* be true that punk significantly reinvigorated the anarchist movement (as also suggested by some interviewees and commentators in the UK), but Poland has an extensive anarchist heritage, and even during the Soviet-communist regime anarchist ideas were not *totally* eradicated. And as Wojtek noted, the anarchist movement was not wholly associated with punk even during the opposition period: 'Each city had its own specifics. We [in Warsaw] were more anarcho-situationist and punks, yes. Gdańsk was more syndicalist and frankly there [is] still this gap.' This 'gap' is suggestive of disagreement between divergent forms of anarchist organising, and punk's positioning within that – with some 'workerist' activists dismissing punk's influence, or even opposing that influence. This 'gap,' which also emerged in the UK context above, will be explored in detail in Chapter 6, but it is sufficient at present to point to anarchist groups that had little or no engagement with punk, despite the assertions of some interviewees here.

The connection between punk and anarchism in Poland in the 1980s was highly salient, and was hugely influential on both the anarchist movement and the punk scene. Artur was critical of the effects of this relationship during the 1990s:

> We saw it in Poland … [during] the fall of the state-communism or state-socialism or whatever you call it … and like also [the] start of an alternative scene that was opposed to it. But on the other hand it was [also] opposed to … [the] official Solidarity movement, and [it was] kind of … individualistic from the beginning. And then in the '90s you could [see] the bloom of this ultra-individualism, let's say, and focussing on … fetishising this 'scene' … And it was clearly so that people in this time of the transformations … those people that would declare themselves really political they were just focussing on who's wearing dreadlocks and who's wearing sport shoes y'know, and it's … really ridiculous.[137]

So, as far as Artur is concerned, the period after the collapse of the Soviet-communist regime saw a decline in punk's engagement with activist politics. Wojtek expressed something very similar, saying that:

[137] Interview conducted 16/05/2013

> most of the old crew with whom we work[ed] up to [1990], they [were] people … a little bit older than us, but who in the late-'80s felt capitalism, as a structure, [to be] more libertarian. So they really [became] a little captivated by it, and even often in the '90s sailed in the direction of capitalism.

For Marta, the punk involvement in the 1980s opposition movement was 'just about the political situation of a country … I think there is just a time for everything y'know. And this time just finish[ed], because now I just don't feel that [connection between anarchism and punk].' So there is a clear sense of political disengagement in the 1990s, following from the hugely politicised era of the late-1980s. This might be argued to have some similarity with the UK punk scene, which, as discussed, experienced a lull after the demise of the Thatcher regime. However, the 1990s was certainly not devoid of important political developments in the punk scene. Wojtek recalled that his 'unit' carried out:

> acts of resistance against capitalism … already [beginning] in '89 … [with the] reforms [implemented by] Balcerowicz, or acute Shock Therapy. Even then, we did very *huligańskie* ['hooliganish'] things just to fight this, but we had no ideological support, we had no materials on anti-capitalism.

Contrary to his own depiction of the 1990s as politically disengaged, Wojtek in fact also described the 1990s as 'a beautiful period for here in this anarcho-punk movement in Poland, pointing particularly to the:

> late-'80s [when] the first squats were created here … In '89, in '90 we have … assumed [a] normal squat in the centre. The idea is that this movement had gained [a] little European dimension. People began to go to Berlin and … became political, and actually a little indistinguishable from fraternal movements in Western countries [in] dress and ideas or … vegetarianism, veganism, anti-fascism … '90s is a very big development here.

Fig. 2.22 – Detail from cover of Sanctus Iuda, *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995).

So during the 1990s in Poland, some of the same politics as identified in the UK come to the fore – animal liberation and anti-fascism. On the one hand Wojtek argues that punk disengaged from anarchist activism during this time, but on the other points to a significant increase in what might be termed as 'cultural' engagements with anarchism. Adrian, likewise, viewed the 1990s as a golden period for the

Fig. 2.23 – Detail from Nikt Nic Nie Wie catalogue sheet (summer 1996), which accompanied Homomilitia, *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996).

'alternative scene … [it] was really big.' Adrian also picked-up on the anti-fascist theme, describing the rise of fascism in Poland during the 1990s, particularly at a sub-cultural level, as a uniting factor: 'It was also a time of huge fights with the Nazis, who were very strong [in] those days.'

So, despite a very different political and social context in Poland, the historical overlap between anarchism and punk can be identified here too. The manifestations of anarchist connections with punk in 1980s Poland are distinct from the UK, as might be expected in the context of mass opposition to a totalitarian regime, but by the 1990s there is a clear influence of Western European 'norms' of anarchist engagement with punk and the activisms associated with that. As in the UK, these historical connections have persisted and developed in the context of contemporary punk scenes and anarchist movements in Poland.

- **Contemporary overlaps between anarchism and punk in Poland**

The connections between punk and anarchist activisms, such as animal liberation and anti-fascism, were, as described above, crystallised in the 1990s, and these remain amongst the most salient overlaps between anarchism and punk. Squatting is another important example of the relationship between punk and anarchism, especially in Poland, and will be explored in depth in the case study focus B (Chapter 4).

The interviewees in Poland expressed a range of views on the contemporary relationship between anarchism and punk, ranging from enthusiastic approval to total and vehement rejection – but even where individuals were critical of this overlap, they did acknowledge its pervasiveness. As Kinga put it: 'I mean there are like people who are not connected with the punk scene, but they are anarchists.

Of course they recognise that there is a connection.'[138] Interviewee Grzegorz is an example of one of those anarchists who are not connected with the punk scene, and in fact felt that the *worst* aspect of anarchism in Poland is that it is 'too connected to punk.'[139] Marta was also critical of punk, but conceded that 'it will be … not fair if I would say "ah, it had nothing in common."' Artur argued that when 'it comes to anarchism and the connections with … punk … actually, in most cases, all the subcultures or fashions … would be just [a] safety valve I think.' So while these interviewees are critical of anarchism's relationship with punk, they still recognise it as a strong connection. Paulina was less sceptical when she said: 'I don't see it [punk] as a negative influence. For me it's neutral.'[140] Other interviewees were far more positive about the connection between punk and anarchism. Szymon, discussing the early-2000s in particular, said, 'we shouldn't split up … between the punks and anarchists, because that was together,' and that today, 'they are connected very highly.' Rafa was extremely positive, and viewed the relationship as being very close. He said, 'for sure in Poland the strongest part of the [anarchist] movement it's connected with punk rock … I think the [anarchist] scene in Poland comes from punk rock anyway.'[141] He continued:

> I mean maybe you are not anarchist but you have these y'know ideas about feminism, ecology, y'know, liberation stuff and so on, so maybe you don't call it anarchy, but this is. If you look into the history of punk rock [it's] also connected … with the social movements and the resistance [in the 1980s] and so on. So it's for me it's obvious that punk rock comes from y'know these ideas of resistance against the government, y'know, self-organisation, co-operation and so on. So punk rock for me is like y'know an essence of anarchy, somehow, or this demonstration of anarchy … For me it was obvious, that it's … just connected very tight. And my punk rock bands and everything … we were singing about anarchist ideas, and y'know everything was around this, and squats. And everything what I did and what I do right now, what is connected [with] punk rock is also connected with anarchy.

Fig. 2.24 – *Muzyka Z Barykad* [*Music From the Barricades*], (Irokez, c. 2004). Benefit for Federacja Anarchistyczna.

[138] [emphasis added]
[139] Interview conducted 21/05/2013
[140] Interview conducted 17/05/2013
[141] Interview conducted 27/05/2013

Rafa mentions squatting and feminism in his explanation of the connections between anarchism and punk, each of which are explored more fully in case study foci A and B (Chapters 3 and 4), but the key point here is of punk as a 'demonstration of anarchy.' So, according to the interviewees' responses, the contemporary overlap between punk and anarchism is very strong indeed, though their analyses of that situation vary widely.

Fig. 2.25 – The Fight, *Maldicion*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2009).

- *Punk and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism in Poland*

As in the UK, the anarchist activisms most commonly associated with punk include animal liberation/veganism and food sovereignty initiatives like Food Not Bombs (FNB). A high proportion of interviewees in Poland were vegan (or at least vegetarian). Kasia had been vegetarian since the age of 14, but through her involvement in punk became vegan, pointing to the near-ubiquity of veganism in punk: 'this whole idea of hardcore and like veganism.' Kinga's band included animal liberation as a lyrical theme, but her own veganism was inspired 'just [by the] example from my friends who ceased eating meat … It was very obvious from the start, we shouldn't be eating animal flesh,' with a more critical analysis of animal liberation developing 'later on.' Dominik, similarly, described adopting vegetarianism because of his peers:

> it was like all of my friends were vegetarian, so I felt 'eh, this is the way.' It was not like, I mean, not like animal rights [laughs]. It was not about y'know, any compassion or something like that, it was about 'OK, this is punk rock, all of my friends are vegetarian, so this is the way how to do it.' I mean, I'm vegetarian 'til now, like for twelve years or something like that. So I stayed, and all those aspects of being vegetarian came later, but the first impulse was like, 'alright, this is the way it has to be done.'[142]

He viewed that 'punk rock is not about being vegetarian, it's just somehow connected.' This understanding of cultural norms within punk scenes points to an expectation for punks to adhere to a vegan diet, and further raises issues of how this norm is 'policed.' This pivots on a tension between individual choice and subcultural expectation, and in a scene where personal freedom is

[142] Interview conducted 31/05/2013

Fig. 2.26 – 'No Coke, No Meat, No Bullshit,' mural in Café Tygrys, Warsaw, (run by punks).

especially important, such as punk, this tension is particularly poignant.[143] Szymon, on the other hand, viewed punk's connection to animal liberation and veganism as something much more integral. He said:

> like [the] whole animal liberation and vegan movement … I can say that they teach you to think more about each other and other beings and some empathy for sure. And if you start thinking with more empathy, it's easier to think about the workers and the Guantanamo prisoners.

This understanding of veganism and animal liberation activism as part of a wider critique of oppression adds further weight to the argument for a connection with anarchism. The relationship between punk and veganism/animal liberation is most sensibly understood in terms of an *intersectional* (and anarchist) opposition to domination in all forms.[144] Anarchist deployments of intersectionality in punk will be discussed in more detail in case study focus A (Chapter 3).

Food Not Bombs is a frequent point of overlap between anarchism, animal liberationism/veganism, and punk. Kasia said, 'the most punky [initiative] … here [at Rozbrat] is Food Not Bombs.'[145] Drew Robert Winter points to the three basic principles of Food Not Bombs activism as evidence of the initiative's intrinsic, if not explicit, anarchism:

[143] See: Tilbürger and Kale, *'Nailing Descartes to the Wall*,' p. 20
[144] See: Ibid. p. 34
[145] Interview conducted 15/05/2013

Fig. 2.27 – Food Not Bombs [in Polish] banner, Poznań.

The 3 Principles of Food Not Bombs. 1. The food is always vegan or vegetarian and free to everyone without restriction, rich or poor, stoned or sober. 2. Food Not Bombs has no formal leaders or headquarters, and every group is autonomous and makes decisions using the consensus process. 3. Food Not Bombs is dedicated to nonviolent direct action and works for nonviolent social change.[146]

There is a pacifist element here, which clearly chimes with the anti-nuclear and Crass 'peace punk' activism discussed in the historical UK context. Mateusz, who is involved in the Odzysk squat in Poznań, discussed his experiences of Food Not Bombs activism. In addition to the politicising role for participants, and the direct impact of feeding hungry people, Mateusz stressed that FNB activists in Poznań:

> wanted also to [make an] impact … to talk about the political issue of this action … So [much] money goes for the military stuff … and not only … for the military stuff. For example here, in Poznań … last year there were … Euro [football] championship, and so [much] was spent … on the construction of the stadium.[147]

So Food Not Bombs, in addition to its vegan aspect and the direct benefits of feeding hungry people, also makes a critique of capitalism, and operates along anarchist lines. The participants within the autonomous FNB chapters around the world are very often punks, as is also the case in Poland. As such, FNB provides another example of the close connection between anarchism and punk. FNB is also recognised as an important step in the politicisation towards anarchism which results from involvement in punk scenes, as will be discussed further, below.

[146] Drew Robert Winter, 'Doing Liberation: The Story and Strategy of Food Not Bombs,' in *Anarchism and Animal Liberation. Essays on complementary elements of total liberation*, Anthony J. Nocella II, Richard J. White and Erika Cudworth (eds.), (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2015), p. 61, citing *The Three Principles of Food Not Bombs* found at http://www.foodnotbombs.net/principles.html [accessed 13th March 2016]

[147] Interview conducted 18/05/2013

- *Punk and anti-fascism in Poland*

Anti-fascism is another prominent concern among Polish punks. Compared to the UK, Poland has a much more serious problem with violent fascist groups. Dominik discussed the issue of fascists in Poland in the 1990s, saying that:

> the whole community, the whole punk scene, the people that were punks were just fighting these people … and I mean fighting literally, they were just beating them on the street or something like that. And like, in 2000, 2001, it was not a problem at all. In Wrocław … I never met a Nazi, never ever. Never met a bonehead, never met a guy with celtic cross.

Kasia too recalled the robust physical response to 'skinhead fascists in [the] '90s … [The] antifa group here … actually they just kicked them out from the city [laughs]. But now it's started again and it's … mostly connected … with the crisis that we have in Poland.' As Vysotsky writes: 'Anti-fascists' participation in subcultural activities places them in spaces that facilitate direct, physical contact between them and white supremacists,'[148] and that '[a]nti-fascists have little recourse but to turn to violence as a means of self-defence against white supremacists and of wresting control of these spaces away from them.'[149] The far-right has been re-emergent in Poland in recent years, as a result of the 2008 economic crash, anti-refugee sentiment, and fuelled by conspiracy theories around the Smolensk plane crash.[150] A prominent indication of the rise of fascism in Poland was the success of the far right *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (Law and Justice) Party in the October 2015 elections.[151] Street-level fascist groups have also been increasingly active, often targeting squats and squatters with violent attacks. This has been a fairly recent development, as Adrian noted: 'if you came here a few years ago I would have told you that there is no fascist threat

Fig. 2.28 – Selection of antifa stickers from Warsaw.

[148] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 281
[149] Ibid. p. 283
[150] A plane carrying numerous high-ranking members of the Polish government crashed near Smolensk on 10th April 2010. Numerous conspiracy theories have emerged from the crash, especially on the part of Polish nationalists who blame Russia for the incident. The twin brother of the leader of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość was killed in the crash, who have benefitted electorally from the conspiracy theories and general shift to the right.
[151] 'A far-right, anti-refugee party has won a landslide in Poland,' (Agence France-Presse article), *The Journal*, (26th October 2015), http://www.thejournal.ie/poland-elections-2409911-Oct2015/ [accessed 26th November 2015], and Alex Duval Smith, 'Poland lurches to right with election of Law and Justice party,' *The Guardian*, (26th October 2015), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/25/poland-lurches-to-right-with-election-of-law-and-justice-party [accessed 26th November 2015]

Fig. 2.29 – 'Good Night Left Side,' fascist graffiti very near to Wagenburg in Wrocław.

at all … But the thing is they are raising in strength, they are attacking social centres.' Many of the squats visited during the research in Poland were affected by attacks, or the threat of attacks, from fascists. Rozbrat has been attacked on numerous occasions in the past, Wagenburg in Wrocław had been attacked a few months previous to the research, Odzysk was issued with a threat during the research, and just a few months afterwards Przychodnia was attacked by *several hundred* fascists.[152] Natalia told of an attack by neo-Nazis against Rozbrat in 1996: 'at the beginnings of Rozbrat [the fascists] came … and they beat people and attack[ed] a woman with the knife.'[153] Natalia said that people who had been involved in Rozbrat during attacks by fascists in the 1990s had a more militant mindset than the younger generation of squatters:

> I think from that time, the older persons that [have been] for [a] longer time in our group, have a different [way] of seeing the problem. [They are] more likely to fight, because now a lot of young people in the group don't want to fight with Nazi skins, because they aren't seeing the problem. If you get [this] in your face you see the problem [as being] more real.

Fig. 2.30 – Front gate of Rozbrat, with SS and celtic cross fascist graffiti (just) visible.

As a direct result of this historical and recently re-emerging threat, Rozbrat's perimeter is heavily fortified, and the front gate in particular is an imposing sheet of metal, surrounded by barbed wire.[154] During the research, local fascists in Poznań reminded Rozbrat of their presence by spray-

[152] Video of the attack here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yR__nYG6wBU [accessed 26th November 2015]. Przychodnia issued a statement in the aftermath of the attack, which can be found here: 'Przychodnia Skłot statement on fascist attack against the social center 11th of November in Warsaw, Poland,' 12th November 2013: https://avtonom.org/en/news/przychodnia-sklot-statement-fascist-attack-against-social-center-11th-november-warsaw-poland [accessed 26th November 2015]. A counter-demonstration was called for 15th November 2013, which was well attended. Video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za6sHbddGqM&feature=youtu.be [accessed 26th November 2015]

[153] Interview conducted 19/05/2013

[154] Rozbrat's Wikipedia page (which is assumed to have been updated by the collective themselves) mentions the attack in their history: http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rozbrat [accessed 31st March 2015], and the Rozbrat

painting the front gate with celtic crosses[155] and SS (Nazi Schutzstaffel) symbols. The attack on Wagenburg in 2012, like the attack against Przychodnia in 2013, occurred on the 11th of November, the day of Poland's national celebration of independence, which has been adopted by the far-right and white nationalists for their 'march of the patriots.' Krzysztof said that Wagenburg had been targeted:

> because we are leftist … But there was some other story also … because [the] nationalists are not strong enough … they need hooligans with them, so they prepare[d] a story that Wagenburg is antifa, and antifa is against local football team … During the national day of Poland they collect[ed] one hundred people, hundred soldiers no? [laughs] And do this action.

Fig. 2.31 – Banner in support of antifa prisoners in Russia, in Poznań.

Krzysztof described the attack:[156]

> They beat-up people and destroy[ed]. They smash[ed] windows. And then they [had] to run away because police came, half [an] hour later … It was everywhere in the news because one guy was very bad[ly] beaten … they almost killed him … The city hall got [a] million złoty [about £180,000] … [and] gave this money *to the police* [laughs] … to put [up] more cameras and to make more controls [laughs]. But nothing [for] education.

During the research, Wagenburg was in the process of fortifying their perimeter, as had already been done at Rozbrat. Krzysztof lamented the necessity of closing-off Wagenburg from the public:

> it used to be always [an] open place. We never had [a] closed gate and people was coming in and out when they want … and more things [were] happen[ing] before … We cannot do so many gigs any more, and we have to put [up the] fence, so, I'm afraid that we['re]

website notes that 'because of safety reasons, the entrance was allowed only with an invitation': http://www.rozbrat.org/our-activity/157-rozbrat-squat [accessed 31st March 2015]

[155] A symbol widely used by white supremacists.

[156] English language report available here - https://en.squat.net/2012/12/17/november-11-2012-wagenburg-breslau/ [accessed 31st March 2015]

> gonna be more closed. But of course people have some post [traumatic] stress syndrome. So, this safeness is very important.

During the research, the Odzysk squatters were also heavily preoccupied with fortifying vulnerable points of the building, in the wake of a threat made against them by fascists. As with the attack against Wagenburg, football hooliganism was an important element, the threat coinciding with a big home game for Lech Poznań football club, which brought large crowds of football fans onto the central square where Odzysk is located. On this occasion the attack did not materialise, but considerable time and resources had been directed towards the threat. As Mateusz said:

> if there would be no risk of someone's attack we could spend more time on making some actions, events and so on. But now we have to, let's say, prepare the [building] … in case of … attack … Yeh, just for security reason[s] we['re] making some improvements to the building.

As well as building defensive structures, many squatters are also preoccupied with self-defence training and organising antifa groups. As Pawel noted, and as was described above, antifa groups are very often associated with the punk scene: 'A lot of these people [do] not necessarily listen to punk rock now, but like it's grown out of the punk scene, I would say.'[157] Dominik emphasised the norm of an anti-fascism in punk scenes in Poland, saying, 'most of my friends are punks, and this [racism, homophobia, islamophobia] is not accepted here.' Natalia discussed the antifa tactic of physical confrontation against fascists:

> We have a group that is fighting physically … We learn to defend ourselves, but also, when we see something on the street, to react. But most[ly] it's to defend ourselves. There are some persons that want to fight first … to be aggressive to Nazi skins, but most of the group is not very happy with that … But now we have antifa Poznań and I think we are strong. We can defend other cities around.

M. Testa's history of anti-fascism in Europe makes the point, with sheer weight of evidence of success, that violence is a necessary and highly effective tactic in opposing street-level violent fascists.[158] Vysotsky analyses this tactic in more depth, writing that:

> Militancy becomes a practical stand against an opposing movement that has an ideological imperative to use violence against it. For anti-fascists, the use of confrontational tactics is an important political tool because it demonstrates to a movement that highly values

[157] Interview conducted 27/05/2013
[158] M. Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism. A Hundred Years of Resistance*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2015)

violence that its opponents will not simply acquiesce to their demands, but will resist. If white supremacists rely on intimidation to achieve their goals, the confrontational and violent actions of anti-fascists serve to undermine the effectiveness of these threats.[159]

The sense of immediate physical danger stemming from an anti-fascist identity, the ideological threat of neo-Nazism, and the loss of control and security within subcultural spaces necessitates a confrontational and sometimes violent response in order to achieve a sense of security.[160]

However, Adrian noted that anti-fascist activity represents a considerable drain on resources and time: 'a lot of strength is diverted from positive work, creating spaces or … getting involved into political stuff … positive stuff, or just fighting capitalism. But we are threatened by the Nazis all the time, so … all our efforts have to go in this direction.' Szymon noted at least one positive effect of the fascist threat, in that efforts to oppose the right wing could unite a wide spectrum of political opinions:

Fig. 2.32 – Anti-fascist graffiti in Warsaw.

For example in … this counter-demonstration … there's like [everything] from communism to hardcore queer stuff, animal liberation, veganism, straight edgers, anarchism, punks, social democratics, politicians even, everybody … When the action came, everybody can stay together and do something.

This point makes clear that anti-fascism is not the reserve of punks, and in fact frequently brings anarchists and punks into (usually temporary) coalitions with other anti-fascist and anti-racist groups in reaction to particular fascist threats.

While anti-fascism is clearly a major concern for punk scenes in Poland, interviewees also expressed criticisms of antifa groups, especially in terms of macho attitudes and myopic political analyses. As Marta put it:

[159] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 280
[160] Ibid. p. 268

Fig. 2.33 – Detail from flyer for 161 Crew antifa group in Warsaw.

I'm sorry to say, but in my opinion, antifa is just like a group of guys that have too much of testosterone and they just wanna fight … Most of them, they're sexist, most of them, they're totally homophobic, and they use a lot of this hate speech, like calling their friends, 'ah, you fucking faggot' … or 'you're a pussy,' or whatever. For me it's just like I don't see the big difference between these two sides y'know?

She also added that people involved in antifa did not necessarily have a nuanced critique of contemporary fascism, lamenting that 'they don't want to see the bigger context of fascism now.' She argued that the Polish government (even before the electoral success of the far-right *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*) 'are doing a lot of things that I … would call fascism. They don't make this connection.' Paulina identified the same problems: 'There were some anti-fascist boys who'd say they are not political and they only … fight with Nazis on the streets. I mean what is political and what is not? But … they were openly ignoring … all of the other politics we do.' She continued:

> I have a problem with some antifa macho boys. And it is also [a] macho thing, I mean you can hear in the house, y'know, the guys talking everyday in the morning, breakfast, about fights … Well, I can't stand that sometimes. Of course, I understand the need of fighting Nazis on the streets, but I can't accept if that became an identity politics.

Paulina noted some efforts on the part of Anarchist Federation to tackle the sometimes limited views of antifa activists:

Fig. 2.34 – Anti-fascist artwork in Zemsta anarchist bookshop, Poznań.

> In the Anarchist Review we wrote a series of articles about fascism and capitalism, how it links together. Actually we tried to give some understanding of what is the roots of the fascism … The anti-fascist movement should understand that it's part of … the anti-capitalist movement, which is not so obvious for everyone.

Artur described how the antifa group in Poznań is trying 'do anti-fascism without doing anti-fascism … focussing on mutual aid and links between us and the other groups of people in Poznań so we can get … popular links that would actually neutralise the fascist ideas.' He said, 'of course in some situations it's necessary to use violence or self-defence actually,' but that 'when it comes to anti-fascism we …need to focus on broad activities … it can't be just done one way.' Whatever the tensions surrounding tactical approaches, it is clear that antifa is closely associated with punk in Poland (see also Appendix 5, part B), providing another example of punk's connection with anarchism.

- *A sense of decline in Polish punk?*

To restate, this is not to say that punk and anarchism are found *exclusively* in connection with one another – as Krzysztof points out: 'Not all anarchists have to be punks, and not all punks are anarchists.' Kinga recognised that 'some punks are not political punks, they just want to play music and that's all. OK, let them be.' However, while the relationship is not argued to be ubiquitous, it *is* extremely prevalent in the Polish context and to a greater degree than in the UK. That said, Natalia did note a similar shift in the membership of organised anarchist groups similar to that discussed by Jack in the UK, with a growing number of people coming to anarchism from outside of the punk milieu. She said:

> [t]he movement is growing from a few things and one of [those] things is the punks. Maybe now it's changed because of the hip-[hop], or because of … a lot of 'normal' persons … But [still] we have some punks, new, young punks and it still exist[s], *it's not so strong*, but it still exist[s].

As with the UK, the connection between anarchism and punk is clearly important, and highly influential over the wider anarchist movement.

Indonesia

- **Historical overlap between anarchism and punk in Indonesia**

Fig. 2.35 – Patch of Keparat, punk band from Bandung formed in the 1990s.

With similarity to the Polish context, the historical relationship between anarchism and punk in Indonesia is heavily influenced by their involvement in the opposition movement against dictatorship. The student-led movement toppled the Suharto regime in 1998. Opposition groups often defined themselves as anti-fascist, identifying the totalitarian, capitalistic, and militaristic aspects of the regime which ruled from 1968-1998. Owing to the suppression of 'Western' culture under the pseudo-fascist[161] Suharto regime, the first punk bands emerged in Indonesia as late as 1989, with a proliferation of punk scenes in the early 1990s. As Sean Martin-Iverson writes: '[u]nderground music gained in popularity during the 1990s, in the context of increased access to global media and the decline of the authoritarian New Order regime's cultural and political hegemony.'[162] Early bands include: Antiseptic from Jakarta formed in 1990; Blind To See from Bandung formed in 1990; Turtles Jr from Bandung formed in 1992 (still playing today). US corporate pop-punk giants Green Day played in Jakarta in 1996, and this is mentioned by many punks in Indonesia as an important moment in the popularisation of punk across Indonesia. Emma Baulch notes their influence in Bali in the mid-to-late-1990s, where 'Green Day's music echoed throughout the province … [and] Green Day cover bands dominated the scene.'[163] As in other contexts, punk's first emergence in Indonesia was concerned with fashion and music, with an at-best incoherent politics. Interviewee Zaqi said, 'like [before, it]

Fig. 2.36 – Turtles Jr merchandise, boasting their longevity.

[161] Andre Vltchek writes: 'During the so-called New Order (*Orde Baru*) Indonesia's resources and companies were privatised, cronyism became endemic and the country turned into a hybrid of feudalism and fascism, increasingly intolerant and intellectually isolated.' (Andre Vltchek, *Indonesia. Archipelago of Fear*, (London: Pluto Press, 2012), p. 39)

[162] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 383, citing: Emma Baulch, 'Alternative music and mediation in late New Order Indonesia,' *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, (2002), pp. 219-234; and Krishna Sen and David T. Hill, *Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000)

[163] Baulch, 'Creating A Scene,' pp. 5-6

Fig. 2.37 – Sticker of an (old) band called Frontline, featuring circled-A *and* celtic cross.

was only music and … only fashion.'[164] Gilang concurred, 'in the beginning … punk in Bandung, it's like [the] new fashion, new lifestyle.'[165] As Zaqi put it: 'for hang[ing] out, that's all punk [was].' In common with the UK and Poland, swastikas were a feature of early punk scenes in Indonesia,[166] pointing once again to an inconsistent politics associated with shock tactics. In Erik Hannerz's mid-2000s research into Indonesian punk scenes he met 'several' punks displaying a swastika. He writes that '[m]ost often it was authenticated as a symbol for punk, pointing to both the Ramones' and Sex Pistols' use of it.'[167] However there were 'a few participants that defined the swastika by its Nazi connotations, expressing that as such it expressed "punk's hatred of the world".'[168] During the research in Indonesia in 2012 and 2015 the only fascist symbol encountered was a celtic cross incorporated into a band's logo on an *old* sticker, and this was accompanied by an anarchist circled-A (again highlighting the political confusion evident in early punk scenes). There were no swastikas being displayed by punks, and anti-fascist imagery was clearly evident. Jeremy Wallach notes this shift from fascist to anti-fascist imagery in punk in Indonesia:

> As the Indonesian underground punk scene developed, its more intellectually engaged members increased their knowledge of punk history, including the movement's frequent (if not always consistent) opposition to fascism, racism, and neo-Nazism in the West. While some punks in Jakarta still wore the symbol, many more adopted anti-Nazi

Fig. 2.38 – Antifa imagery on sweatshirt in Bandung (front and back).

[164] Interview conducted 27/09/2012
[165] Interview conducted 27/09/2012
[166] See: Jeremy Wallach, 'Living the punk lifestyle in Jakarta,' *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 52, no. 1, (2008), pp. 98-116
[167] Hannerz, *Performing Punk.* PhD thesis, p. 123
[168] Ibid. p. 124. Hannerz also notes the added complication of the anti-swastika in Hindu areas of Indonesia such as Bali and some parts of Java, where it was viewed as an anti-Hindu symbol by authorities and parents.

> symbols. By late 1999, anti-Nazi slogans and iconography had become conspicuous at punk shows.[169]

Further engagement with punk in 'the West,' via post-colonial links with the Netherlands, facilitated the transmission of anarchist/punk connections to Indonesia. Gilang identified a person from a Dutch punk band called Antidote as a source of anarchist literature: 'We were doing many correspondences with some people abroad. And they sent us many leaflets about anarchy, politics. Mostly about anarchism … After that we started to learn about anarchism.' Gilang's group in Bandung were also responsible for producing what he describes as the first political punk zine in Indonesia in mid-1996: 'We made a zine … the first politic[al one]. Most of the zines at the times spoke about music … [Our zine was called] *Submissive Riot*. It ha[d] nothing about bands at all.'[170] Joanna Pickles also points to the availability of explicitly anarchist punk zines from the US, such as *Profane Existence*, articles from which 'were translated and published in the Indonesian fanzine *Kontaminasi Propaganda* in 1999 and that this coincided with a growing tension between groups regarding differing interpretations of punk.'[171]

- *Activism, anti-fascism and anarchism in Indonesian punk – 1990s*

The mid-to-late-1990s was the culmination of the movement against the Suharto regime, helped along by external factors such as the 1997 Asian financial crisis and US/IMF pressure for Indonesia to *even further* open up its markets and rich resources to international corporations.[172] As interviewee Eka describes, this situation was influential in the further politicisation of Indonesian punk scenes:

> During the fall of the Suharto regime … like '96 until '98 … that was also the time where the punk movement start[ed to be] more active in many scenes, like mostly from Bandung, Jakarta. It contribute[d] also with anarchism, even though it was still [at] a very

[169] Wallach, 'Living the punk lifestyle in Jakarta,' p. 111, also cited in Hannerz, *Performing Punk*, PhD thesis, p. 220

[170] The *Submissive Riot* zine is also noted as an important development in Indonesian punk in Joanna Pickles, *Of purple hair and protest: Beyond spectacular style, Bandung's punks in collective action*, (The Australian National University: Faculty of Asian Studies, 2001)

[171] Hannerz, *Performing Punk.* PhD thesis, p. 220, citing Pickles, *Of purple hair and protest*, p. 51

[172] Suharto had been helped into power by the US state and corporate interests, which allowed the continuation of rapacious resource extraction from Indonesia, as had been the case under Dutch colonial rule. However, as his regime faltered Suharto increasingly adopted protectionist policies in a late attempt at populism, setting his former international corporate benefactors against him, and ensuring his swift removal from power.

> very basic level, and I think that's the period where people start[ed] to be more critic[al] and get more access.[173]

Aulia, who had moved from the US to Indonesia in 2010 said, 'what I've learned from my friends here, in the late-'90s, punk was this huge communal thing here that really pushed back. This was at the end of Suharto's regime.'[174] Arief said, 'the Indonesian punk band[s] at this time [late-1990s] were using anarcho-punk lyrics. In their song[s] they [were] talking about Indonesian politics and anti-capitalism things.'[175] Martin-Iverson notes this growing politicisation as well, writing that '[d]uring the *Reformasi* (Reform) period in the late 1990s, in the context of a wider youth revolt against the authoritarian New Order regime, this scene became associated with radical political activism and especially *anarchism*.'[176] Gilang described how the influence of anarchism in punk, and the wider political situation led to the 'Chaos Day' on New Year's Eve 1996, which was described as an explicitly punk and anarchist protest:

> At the time, I got a magazine … don't know where I got it. And like in Germany, there was Punk Chaos or Chaos Day in Germany … and we tried to imitate that … We were so bored to just hang around and drinking. We planned to make chaos [in] the streets, we destroyed anything on the streets including billboards, cars, and anything. That was in '96, and about 48 people were arrested, including myself.

A second Chaos Day was planned for New Years' Eve 1997:

> Because it was Suharto's regime … we planned that [there] would be chaos every New Year's Eve. [In] '97, at the New Year's Eve … people came from many places and they wanted to do chaos action as well … It was election times, so the government [passed a] regulation that anyone who makes chaos will be shot directly. So, it [didn't] happen in '97 … The chaos [didn't] happen, because we knew about that regulation from the newspaper.

The Chaos Day action is interesting for several reasons, not least in terms of the 'imitation' of the German Chaos Day, and in the severity of the repression from the state which will be explored

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[173] Interview conducted 30/09/2012
[174] Interview conducted 26/09/2012
[175] E-mail 'chat' interviews conducted 23/02/2013 and 19/03/2013
[176] Sean Martin-Iverson, 'Running in circles: Value struggles and the contradiction of political performance in the Bandung DIY hardcore scene,' paper presented to the 'Disentangling the creative process: Knowledge and value(s) in creative performance' panel at the 2011 IUAES/AAS/ASAANZ Conference 'Knowledge and Value in a Globalising World,' 5th-8th July 2011, The University of Western Australia, Perth, p. 2, citing Joanna Pickles, 'Punk, Pop and Protest: The Birth and Decline of Political Punk in Bandung,' *RIMA*, vol. 41, no. 2, (2007), pp. 223-246, [emphasis added]

further in case study focus C (Chapter 5). It also highlights the overlap between punk, anarchism, and the anti-Suharto movement in Indonesia. However, punk and anarchist involvement in the movement to oppose the Suharto regime extended beyond rioting. As Martin-Iverson writes:

> *Reformasi* was the highpoint for anarcho-punk in the Indonesian underground, a combination of militant anarchist politics and aggressive punk music which gave voice to newly assertive identities and politics of youth … Indonesian anarcho-punk took the ascendant liberalising tendencies of the *Reformasi* era to an extreme, emphasising a radical and disruptive form of individual autonomy against the disciplining powers of the state.[177]

Martin-Iverson points to the 'liberal' or 'liberalising' aspects of the movement, but opposition was often framed explicitly as anti-fascism, struggling against Suharto's regime in terms of its militarism, capitalism, and totalitarianism. Zaqi said, 'Indonesia [was] very fascist, [back] in 1995 … all system is like military. So we, the punks, is against like fascism, authority. So we join with that, we agree with punk and we make songs for communicat[ing].' Gilang's *Submissive Riot* zine sprouted into an organised group in 1997: 'then we start to make an anti-fascist faction called FAF [*Front Anti-Fasis* or Anti-Fascist Front] … The nation struggle[d] against dictatorship [which] made the anti-fascist movement spread wider.' Gilang pointed to the popularity of the group among punks: 'The Anti-Fascist Front were [joined] by much punks in Bandung,' but also pointed to the significance of the wider political situation: '[i]t was also a moment where all people have their awareness [raised] by the politics, so many people saw our movement [as] just like another opposition party movement.' Gilang said, 'after the *Front Anti Fasis* we studied about politic[s]. There we learned together and started to do some actions … [and] demonstrations, anti-fascist action, and many actions done at the time.' The FAF allied itself with the PRD (*Partai Rakyat Demokratik* or People's Democratic Party), because, said Gilang, 'we were lack[ing] references [for] anarchism, socialism, or about anything.' This suggests the significance of punk in, at least initially, exposing people to anarchist ideas in the absence of access to other literature, in much the same way as described in Poland, above. Gilang continued: 'we weren't joining the party or becom[ing] PRD [members], we just became compani[ons] to learn about anarchism, communism … or socialism from them.' Punks were integral to the formation of the FAF group, but it had wider influence and membership than that, as Gilang says:

> A lot of people know about that. At the time we were like 'working,' not just in punk community, we also spread it to local youth, urban youth, and then to the workers'

[177] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 385, citing Pickles, 'Punk, pop and protest'

> organisations … *We even organised the factory's strike*, and they did it. And many urban people … joined FAF at the time … Many actions [were] done by the anti-fascists like to take over the government's radio station and making statements, because at the time we couldn't say any statement on air.

However, these direct action tactics caused issue with the parliamentarian PRD: 'FAF clashed with PRD because they are left wing, and they didn't accept anarchist idea[s]. And FAF separated from the party, from the alliance.' So, this makes clear that the punk-associated activist group identified clearly as anarchist, and not as vaguely leftist, nor as any derivative of Marxist-Leninism. This is an interesting and important point of commonality with the UK and Polish contexts, as is the extension of punk-associated activisms into industrial struggles and other aspects of anarchism usually understood as 'workerist.'

After the collapse of the Suharto regime in 1998, the FAF joined with other anti-fascist groups across the archipelago to form *Jaringan Anti Fasis Nusantara* [JAFNUS – Archipelago Anti-Fascist Network]. As Arief describes: 'the people inside the groups … some of them were punks. So they [were] also organising DIY gigs or DIY exhibition[s] and squatting buildings.' He describes the kind of activities the anarchist-punk groups were involved with post-1998:

> [After 1998] we still held street demonstration[s]. In Bandung there's also a vandal collective called Keras Kepala[178] which [was] hitting city walls [with] paint. There's also many collectives based on info-housing and litera[ture] publication. The first info-house collective in Bandung was Kontra Kultura. They publish[ed] zines and litera[ture] and sometimes [did] a record label.

So, compared to the pre-1998 struggle against the Suharto regime, there is an apparent shift into more culturally focussed activism and the creation of independent infrastructure – which strongly echoes the description of the immediate post-Soviet period in 1990s Poland. It is clear that the Indonesian punk scene has had a close historical connection with anarchism, and many of the same complexities and issues identified in the UK and Poland are at work here too – especially in terms of tensions around 'cultural' anarchist activism, pointing once again to the tensions between 'lifestylism' and 'workerism.'

Of course, as stated repeatedly elsewhere, this emphasis on the connection between anarchism and punk is not to say that each did not exist independently in its own right. Though, again, anarchism is

[178] 'Keras kepala' means stubborn, or literally 'hard headed.' This is where the Bandung band Krass Kepala derive their name, adding the pun with anarcho-punk progenitors Crass ('Krass').

clearly identified as the most prominent political connection and political expression within punk in Indonesia. As Arief said, '[during the] '90s we can find anarchist groups outside [the] punk scene. There was Taring Padi (an artist community using anarchist approach).' And indeed, not all punks even embraced anti-fascism. Aulia recalled stories from friends about the late-1990s scene, saying that 'antifa here, that wasn't popular with the punks here in the … late-'90s. Friends of mine were actually threatened at shows, threatened to be killed, because they were antifa … Because, at the time, people thought that punk was about being like pro-Nazi.' Gilang recalled that immediately after the fall of the Suharto regime, 'street punks disliked anarcho-punk … Street punks were like rejecting us, we couldn't get [them] involved in politic[s]. It was the end … It was not just happen[ing] in Bandung, [but] almost all over Indonesia.' With strong similarity to situation in Poland in the 1990s, Gilang said, 'after that for the movement … they have their own interest. At the time, after 2002 it makes a huge degradation in the community … about music, about whatever it is, a big degradation, also in the politic[s].' Arief echoed this: 'after 1998 the political awareness become less and less not only on the punk culture, but for the Indonesians [generally].' Martin-Iverson also notes that 'anarcho-punk as a distinct political and subcultural current has declined … [and that] in the 2000s the underground as a whole became much less politically active, reflecting broader trends among Indonesian youth towards lifestylism and political pessimism.'[179] This accusation of 'lifestylism' is indicative of the tensions generated by a perceived focus on cultural anarchist activisms. Chapter 6 examines the slur 'lifestylist' and its frequent association with punk in detail. And as Arief recalled, after 1998 some anarchist groups sought to distance themselves from punk:

> There's also new collectives based on anarchism aris[ing] … Some of the new collectives continue[d] the connection with the punks, but there's also some collectives who didn't want to sa[y] that their anarchist view is related to punks … Some of the collectives didn't see the connection of anarchism and punks in themselves. I mean there's some differences on how we found anarchism … some found it from punk, some from literacy, or some from artworks. So there was the connection.

The existence of a strong historical connection between anarchism and punk in Indonesia is clear, and despite suggestions of declining significance (as echoed in the UK and Poland contexts), this relationship has persisted and developed, and remains prevalent in the contemporary context.

[179] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 385, citing: Nuraini Juliastuti, 'Whatever I want: Media and youth in Indonesia before and after 1998,' *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, (2006), pp. 139-143; and Pam Nilan, 'The risky future of youth politics in Indonesia,' *RIMA*, vol. 38, no. 1, (2004), pp. 173-194

- **Contemporary punk and anarchist activist overlaps in Indonesia**

Martin-Iverson, whose research was conducted from the mid-to-late-2000s, argues that the politicisation fomented around the anti-Suharto movement 'has not been sustained into the post-*Reformasi* period,' and that 'a neoliberal, entrepreneurial approach to punk independence has come to the fore.'[180] However, he also notes, perhaps contradictingly, that '[p]olitically-active punks have been influenced by the resurgence of the Indonesian labour movement during the decline of the New Order [the official name for Suharto's regime], and especially in the aftermath of *Reformasi*,'[181] and that 'Indonesian punks also participate in class-oriented political action, from solidarity with striking workers to participating in May Day demonstrations.'[182] Indeed, among many of the interviewees, there was optimism and enthusiasm for *growing* political consciousness in the punk scene in Indonesia. Zaqi said, 'right now is like lots political,' Arief agreed: 'It is growing. There [are] still many punks with [an] anarchist point of view and they seek each other [out]. And there is anarchists who feel connected to punks.' In addition to the anarchist lyrics, slogans and imagery that are to be expected (see Appendix 4, part C),[183] punk in Indonesia also overlaps with organised anarchist groups and various forms of activism, especially anti-fascism and Food Not Bombs food sovereignty activism – akin to the UK and Poland contexts (though squatting is notably absent, as will be discussed in case study focus B (Chapter 4)). Eka, discussing the overlap between punk and anarchism in Jakarta, said, 'it … develops in many levels now, it's getting spread. Like we start to have like Food Not Bombs and then gigs organising in the DIY way … and we have … like street campaign[s] and yeh mostly in that area, more like … urban issues.' She continued:

> So far from what I see from the punk scene, most of the things that punks do is mostly gigs … But also … there's been a good development, even though it's been really slow … from this punk scene they start to make Food Not Bombs … [they] start to make a community, and then they do something more like education among friends … They also made a campaign [to] fundraise for education in the gigs, not only pure gigs. And yeh, it's getting … more developing now. So … it always have two side[s], y'know, but I'm saying like the movement now com[ing] in, there are friends that still really do cool things … Yeh, lots of projects are happening more lately.

[180] Martin-Iverson, 'Running in circles,' conference paper, p. 2
[181] Sean Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk* and *kaum pekerja:* Indonesian Punk and Class Recomposition in Urban Indonesia,' (draft version), p. 3
[182] Ibid.
[183] Mr. Hostage said, 'we're pretty lucky that we have bands like Marjinal and all that because they look like they really know what they're doing. Y'know it's not like they only adapt the appearance … [F]or many people they are still a very good influence because I guess they sing about oppression and whatnot. So at least they got their message spread across.' (Interview conducted 25/09/2012)

So, even though the 'development' is slower than Eka would wish for, the connection between anarchism and punk is viewed as increasingly strong. Echoing the UK context, Eka mentioned benefit gigs as an important material connection between punk scenes and anarchist activist causes.

Fig. 2.39 – Detail from cover of Krass Kepala, *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015).

- *Personal expression of anarchism by Indonesian punks*

Many punks that were interviewed for the research, despite not being involved in organised anarchist groups, expressed a strong sense of anarchism as personal freedom. The Banda Aceh street punx described it as 'the freedom that doesn't bother or break others. Free as in anarchy.'[184] They continued:

Fig. 2.40 – Circled-A patch in Indonesia.

> Well, if anarchism [were to be] implemented, like punk wants to do to implement anarchism … there are no more power victims. Everybody lives freely and independent[ly]. There would be no slavery, it would be *loh jinawi*[185] and everyone runs for goodness. Basically, every soul wants to live in freedom. But behind that, we['re] all bonded by government's systems. Everyone's bonded. As long as there's injustice, punk will … always exist. Keep exist[ing] on and on … And people who disagree will also always exist.
>
> Peace, anarchy and equality. By socialisation, doing goods to others, *loh jinawi*, helping each other, sharing. Anarchy could be understood as erasing [the] state. If there's no state, like Bakunin said, no more victims of power.

So while the Banda Aceh street punx were not members of an organised anarchist group, their conception of anarchism was carefully considered, and clearly well-informed. Other interviewees

[184] Interview conducted 03/10/2012
[185] Translator's note: 'Indonesian term means well conditioned situation, peace.'

were less nuanced in their interpretation of anarchism, but still conveyed a clear anarchistic mind-set. Septian in Jakarta, said:

> [there are] a lot of anarchist communit[ies], but I don't join … [because I'm] not really into revolutionary [politics]. But we are doing politics every day. Like breathing is political, y'know. Simple politics, not the hardcore … Personal politics. Like we still hate government but [there's] nothing we can do about it, y'know. We have limited power [laughs], but they are very powerful y'know?[186]

Septian described his politics as 'self-rule.'

But, of course, the overlap between anarchism and punk is not ubiquitous, as Indra said, 'sometime[s] [there is] no … connection.' Mr. Hostage pointed out that 'many … punkers here they don't give a shit about politics. I mean, they think that politics is rubbish, it's only for the intellectuals, so they refuse to study.' The 'anti-Politics' mind-set that Mr. Hostage suggests was exemplified by the thrash-punk band Total Anarchy, from Bandung. Despite their moniker, the band are not anarchist and displayed a general misunderstanding of the concept of anarchy. As Haliim said: 'it's just a name. We like it. Anarchy. Total [laughs]. It's just Indonesia … Anything could relate with anarchy in here, in this Indonesia.'[187] The band shared the authorities' interpretation of 'anarchy' as violence and chaos,[188] as Firmansyah put it:

> all of what we don't like, this is anarchy … Things we dislike, we consider it as anarchy. Because the reality is … [there are] many things that dissatisfy us … Many lies out there, also in politic[s]. That made us inspired to compose a song [titled] … 'This is Total Anarchy.'[189]

So the band are politically conscious, but they express this as anti-Politics and have no connection with organised anarchism. Aulia highlighted the existence of elements of the punk scene in Indonesia that are not politically engaged, saying, 'the friends I have here that are feminist or anarchist, are so incredibly like way, way progressive for here.' Contrary to the optimism that she expressed above about the connection between anarchism and punk, Eka was vocal in her disappointment in the dissonance between the rhetoric and ideals expressed by punk zines, and the reality of punk scenes in Indonesia:

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[186] Interview conducted 26/09/2012
[187] Interview conducted 26/09/2012
[188] This will be explored in more detail in case study focus C (Chapter 5), discussing state and religious repression of punk in Indonesia, with the state's new 'Anti-Anarchy' laws being particularly relevant in this case.
[189] Interview conducted 26/09/2012

> From music and then books, zines and everything … there it's really awesome. But when I start to know, getting more close, get to be in touch in a really direct [way with punk], it doesn't really work like that way, and it … fucked me up a lot. Like, so [much] sexism, mostly sexism and hierarchy … and also that friends don't want this whole like really shitty *division of the political and non-political punks*. They're fighting each other about that. At some point I think they had some good dynamics and process, [like] in every kind of movement or culture, but then you have to see that it has to move on. Like you make errors, you make mistakes, and then something good comes. Like, rebuild and destroy, that kind of thing. But the longer time I see, it's not getting better, it's getting worse.[190]

Fig. 2.41 – 'Teruslah Bersinap' [Keep Shining], patch in Indonesia.

> For example when we start to make this first infoshop project [InstitutA] … there are friends from punk scenes, but they're very very [few], because again it's like 'ah, they're the political people, we don't give a shit, we just punks' [laughs].

The distinction (and tension) between 'political' and 'non-political' punks is interesting, and echoes Liptrot's analysis of the UK scene. Eka also raises the issue of sexism in punk, which will be explored in much more detail in case study focus A (Chapter 3). Eka argued that the influence of wider Indonesian society was strongly felt in the punk scene:

> The culture of Indonesia, like the feudalism, patriarchy, sexism that's still very strong … This whole thing is exactly the opposite of the idea of anarchism itself, so it's such a big challenge for individuals … for everybody, so it's like a really personal struggle … There's value[s] that are really strong that are already inherited to you since you were born, like this whole, senior, like older people [gerontocracy], and then also macho attitude, and it becomes a big challenge for everybody here. It's just a thing about whether you … really realise it's a problem, oppression that comes from yourself, that you have to fight it, or it's

[190] [emphasis added]

> just becoming like a style only? And, plus the media always make this really bad propaganda about … how they understand about anarchism.

The issue of 'style' is important here, speaking to the tension between cultural (or 'lifestylist') activism and other activisms which are perceived as being somehow 'more anarchist.' Other interviewees recognised the division between 'political' and 'non-political' punks that Eka mentions, but were at pains to stress that these different attitudes did not mean a split in the scene. Felix in Medan said:

> it's not antagonis[tic], it's like y'know, we are still friends but we got a different mind. [Their] mind is still work[ing] with this idea [of] some movement or something like that, but sometimes we meet, in some gigs, or we organise a gig even … There's [more at] the gigs, not only in music, tabling, there's literature, there's zines, pamphlets, or something like that.[191]

Mr. Hostage viewed that this coming together of political and non-political punk was becoming less common, with the Indonesian scene:

> slowly becom[ing] like any other big countries where y'know they [anarchist punks] distinguish themselves from other communities. It used to be a good thing [laughs] because, y'know, back then when we have gigs we have a mix of punk genres, like it doesn't matter what music, what kind of punk music you play. But we were all friends, so just enjoy[ed] it together. But I guess, slowly [laughs] they become more and more knowledgeable about punks and then they start to, I dunno, distinguish themselves. And they start to put into labels onto people.

Aulia echoed Mr. Hostage's view of punk as developing towards some kind of international (or 'Western') punk/anarchist norm: '[P]eople are still learning, I think, here the concept of punk, of feminism, of all of that, of anarchism, of all of it.' The issue of feminism will be explored further below, but the idea of punk 'progressing' is interesting – activisms are argued to be 'more anarchist' or 'less anarchist' according to overarching criteria or norms which *do not respond to local contexts*.

[191] Interview conducted 01/10/2012

- *Anarchist punk groups in Indonesia*

The explicitly anarchist collectives of InstitutA and Bandung Pyrate Punx have already been alluded to above, and both are rooted in the punk scene. InstitutA is an anarcha-feminist infoshop based in Depok, in the south of the Greater Jakarta area. Eka, who is an InstitutA member, described its role:

> We realised that there's a lack of information and distribution and space. So that's why we made a space where you can get lots of literatures, not only zines, not only punk zines, but many, many source[s], other kind[s], like [the] basic[s] of anarchism, history. And we start[ed] to make the translation so that friends can have more information about that, and also to have a space where you can discuss, and at least in the space we can articulate ourselves to be more who we are, and as a learning space.

The issue of space is of interest in case study focus B (Chapter 4), but this bears striking similarity to Jon's impetus for setting up Active Distribution in the UK, seeking to extend the anarchist influence in punk beyond the punk zines and lyrics and into anarchist literature more generally, as described in the discussion of politicisation, below. Again with similarity to the UK context, interviewee Indra in Medan also pointed to the practice of anarchist groups setting up stalls at punk gigs: 'sometime in the gigs, the anarchist collective[s] [were] tabling …

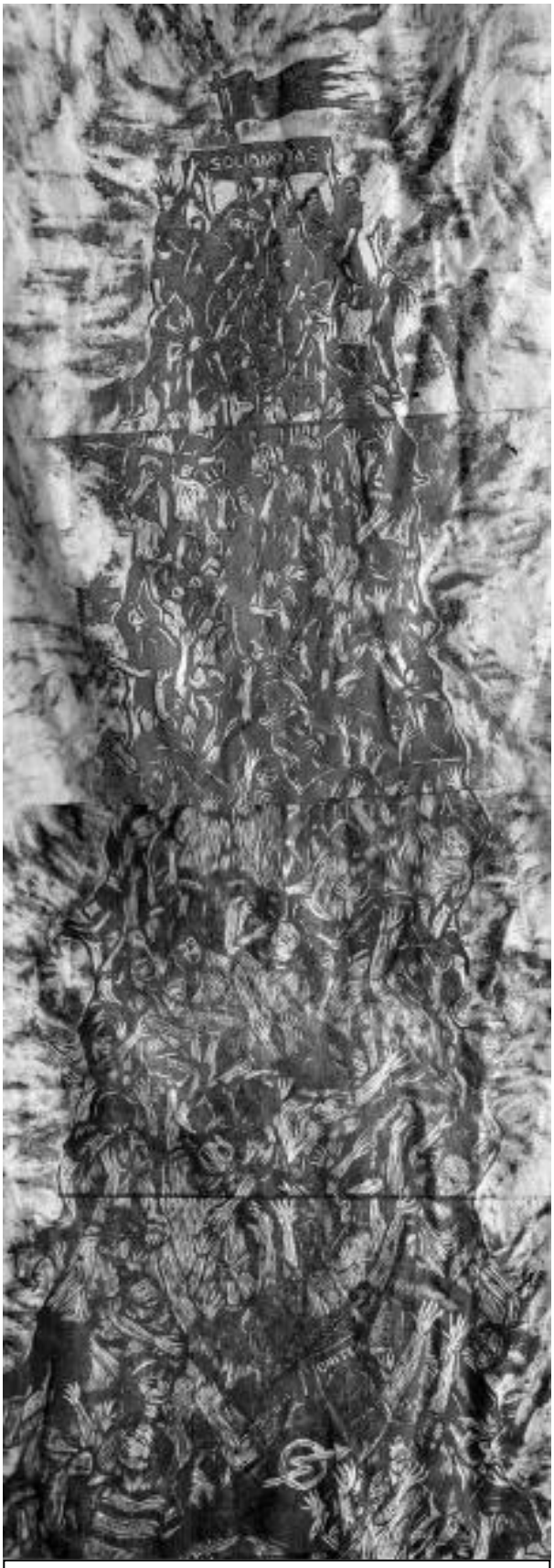

Fig. 2.42 – Screen-print artwork at InstitutA, Depok.

literature, and film screening, discuss[ions] with the other collect[ives], other communit[ies].'[192] The connection between anarchism and punk is also exemplified in the explicitly anarchist punk collective Bandung Pyrate Punx, who are part of a network of 'totally independent D.I.Y. promoters of Psychopathic gigs around the world.'[193] The Pyrate Punk phenomenon has its roots, and most of its chapters, in the US, but the Bandung Collective are also heavily influenced by the European squat punk scene (as will discussed in case study focus B (Chapter 4), below). Zaqi recalled that 'the first Pyrate Punk came to Bandung in 2006 … and I learned … what is Pyrate Punk, and I read it's like anti-fascist, anti-sexism. We agree with that, and this Pyrate Punk is like a *non-profit* collective, yeh stuff like that. We [were] interested [in]that.'[194] The emphasis on 'non-profit' is particularly important in the discussion of DIY in Chapter 6. Arief said:

Fig. 2.43 – 'Brewing.' Stencil at Pirata House, Bandung.

> Personally I got involved with Bandung Pyrate Punx, [at] some point I [came across the] political actions of their movement, and [at] some other point I [was involved with] DIY punk culture. Their movement [is] open to people who can think free[ly] and now many individual anarchist[s] support the Bandung Pyrate Punx. For their movement introduce[s] to other people [the] DIY and anti-capitalism spirit … So, yes they help people discover anarchist ideas.

Putri, Bagus, and Taufan described Pyrate Punk chapters as being decentralised and collectively organised, without hierarchy, but mentioned that they referred to Marcus (from the US) as 'the chief' and had their own local 'captain,' with everyone else known as 'mates.' Rifqi said that this was 'just like a joke,'[195] and Putri asserted that 'there's no real leader, it's just ... "hi chief, hi captain" y'know?'[196] So, collectives such as InstitutA and Bandung Pyrate Punx are extremely important for the relationship between anarchism and punk in Indonesia. They are a manifestation of that relationship, but they also seek to extend it more widely into the punk scene and anarchist movement, with the intention of strengthening both.

Fig. 2.44 – Mural at Pirata House, Bandung.

[192] Interview conducted 01/10/2012
[193] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Chief_Blackdawg/Pyrate_Punx [accessed 28th May 2014]
[194] [emphasis added]
[195] Interview conducted 27/09/2012
[196] Interview conducted 27/09/2012

- *Punk and anti-fascism in Indonesia*

Fig. 2.45 – Anti-fascist tattoo in Bandung.

The importance of anti-fascist critique in the movement against Suharto has already been discussed in relation to the historical relationship between anarchism and punk, but anti-fascism remains a key concern for punk in Indonesia. Interviewee Susanto said simply: 'Punk *is* anti racism,'[197] and anti-fascist imagery was visible around Indonesian punk scenes (see Appendix 5, part C). As in the UK and Poland this is necessitated to a degree because of the fascists' focus on punk and skinhead cultures as recruiting grounds, with punk scenes becoming sites of contention and dispute. Racism in wider Indonesian society, generally directed from the dominant Malay population against indigenous peoples and ethnically Chinese Indonesians provides another impetus for anti-fascist activism. Vltchek writes that:

Fig. 2.46 – 'Perangi Rasis! Perangi Fasis!' [Fight Racism! Fight Fascism!]. Detail from CD booklet of *Riot Connection* Oi! compilation, (Warrior Records, Riot Connection Records, 2010).

> Indonesia could easily be described as the most racist country in the Asia-Pacific, and this is evident in the way it threatens its minorities, especially those who want to escape the iron grip of Jakarta. As if the three genocides[198] the regime has committed are not enough, the minorities, and simply those who look different, are still being threatened with arrogance, sarcasm and spite, and often with violence.[199]

So, even post-*reformasi*, anti-fascism and anti-racism are important issues for the Indonesian punk scenes and anarchist movement to be concerned with. The framing of the anti-Suharto movement as anti-fascist bolsters the contemporary anti-fascist movement, and is used in a similar way to the memory of Nazi Germany or Francoist Spain in the

[197] Interview conducted 04/10/2012

[198] Vltchek refers here to: the massacre of 'communists' and members of the Chinese minority, with '[b]etween 500,000 and 3 million communists, intellectuals, artists, teachers, trade union leaders and members of the Chinese minority' murdered in 1965; the 1975 occupation of East Timor 'and the liquidation of around 30 per cent of the people of that nation; and 'the still ongoing onslaught in Papua, in which at least 120,000 people have already died.' He writes that 'Aceh, Ambon, several areas of Sulawesi and other parts of the country have all also suffered a terrible fate.' (Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 2)

[199] Ibid. p. 111

European context. Once again, the preponderance of anti-fascism among Indonesian punks provides a connection with anarchism, as well as pointing to wider political connections and activist coalitions in which punk is engaged.

- *Punk and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism in Indonesia*

As discussed in the UK and Polish contexts, animal liberation is a primary concern for anarchist-associated punk scenes – but in Indonesia veganism and animal liberation rhetoric and imagery are unusual. The few vegetarians that were encountered often adopted the diet because of an association with straight edge, rather than an explicitly anarchist animal liberation perspective. The two notable exceptions to this were connected to the explicitly anarchist collectives Bandung Pyrate Punx and the Needle 'n' Bitch collective based at the InstitutA infoshop. Needle 'n' Bitch disseminated 'go vegetarian!' slogans on patches, and the collective meals at Bandung Pyrate Punx's Libertad Fest in 2015 were entirely vegan. Arguably the serving of vegan meals at the Libertad Fest was reflective of the international attendees, who were largely vegan, but the Food Not Bombs stall at local Bandung gigs also serves vegan food. In fact, the widespread popularity of Food Not Bombs initiatives across Indonesia complicates this picture of an ostensible lack of interest in veganism and animal liberation. While Food Not Bombs also highlights the wasteful practices of capitalism, and speaks to issues of food sovereignty generally, veganism (or at least vegetarianism) is also a key principle of the action, as discussed above. So while veganism is far less common among Indonesian punks than in the UK or Poland, at the point where punks become engaged in anarchist activism in the form of Food Not Bombs, animal liberation emerges as an important issue. FNB chapters are widespread in Indonesia. Mr. Hostage said there are:

Fig. 2.47 – Food Not Bombs mural at Pirata House, Bandung.

Fig. 2.48 – Patch from Indonesia (it used to say 'go vegetarian!!' but I adapted it for my own use).

> lots of [people in the] crust community, anarchist-punk community, we also have that, so they are really active in the politics … We also have Food Not Bombs, it's all over the country, well maybe not all over the country, but I am very sure *in every big city in Indonesia they have it*.[200]

Fig. 2.49 – 'Food Not Corporation.' A twist on the Food Not Bombs theme, on a patch in Indonesia.

Drew Robert Winter writes that Food Not Bombs is 'not just a group of anarchists, although all of their founding members are proudly anarchists and the group is thoroughly anarchist in its structure,' and cites one of the founding FNB members, Keith McHenry, as saying: '[i]t's more important to do anarchism than be called anarchist.' However, he qualifies this in the case of South East Asia, writing that 'FNBs in the Philippines and Indonesia seem especially fond of the circle-A symbol.'[201] So, the popularity of Food Not Bombs activism in Indonesia provides another connection between anarchism and punk, and as Winter suggests, the anarchist connection in the case of Indonesian FNBs may even be stronger than elsewhere in the world, since it is not primarily based on vegan consumption politics.

- *Other connections between activism and punk in Indonesia*

Despite the success of the movement against Suharto there is still a strong sense of oppositionalism directed against the Indonesian state and the continuing effects of rapacious neo-liberal capitalism, and activism concerned with resource stripping and ecological destruction are a poignant manifestation of this in Indonesia. George Katsiaficas writes that:

Fig. 2.50 – 'Hit neo-liberalism.' Sticker in Jakarta.

> *reformasi*, which many hoped would lead to a complete restructuring of society … [i]nstead [meant] old wine in new bottles, Suhartoism without Suharto – a new version of the military-dominated system they had been fighting, one that benefitted disproportionately a few families at the top and was based on the subordination of two

[200] [emphasis added]
[201] Winter, 'Doing Liberation,' in *Anarchism and Animal Liberation*, p. 68

> hundred million people spread across a wide swath of ocean to the dictates of Jakarta's political-military elite … [T]he IMF crisis and 'democratisation' led to privatisation and greater penetration by global corporations … While Indonesians suffered, foreign companies bought the country's assets at fire sale prices.[202]

This rampant neo-liberalism is recognised by anarchist-engaged punks in Indonesia. For example the Unrest Collective[203] produced a zine in 2012 detailing the effects of corporate iron mining in the Kulon Progo area of Yogayakarta region, Java, and the struggle of the PPLP (*Paguyuban Petani Lahan Pantai* or Society of Coastal Land Farmers) to protect the native farming methods and their community. The Unrest Collective write:

Fig. 2.51 – 'Continue poverty! People are already used to being poor so I raise fuel prices again!' Poster in Jakarta.

> Corporations have been stripping the 'third world', i.e.: developing countries of their natural resources for 100's of years. Indonesia is just one of the most recent on the list of countries being sold out from under the people by their own government to these corporations in order to make a profit … It's time we all know exactly what is going on in the struggle of peasants and indigenous people in Indonesia against these corporate powers who would seek to crush them under weight of their greed and industry.[204]

The zine also reports on the abduction of one PPLP activist, known as Tukijo, by the local police acting on behalf of the mining corporation. In Bandung, some of the punks involved in the anti-mining struggle sabotaged an ATM with a small amount of explosives, and issued a statement in solidarity with the PPLP's campaign, demanding the release of Tukijo. One of the interviewees was arrested for this action and imprisoned for three years. Local punk and anarchist groups helped support the imprisoned individual in a role similar to the Anarchist Black Cross, though they didn't use this organising moniker. The (anonymous) individual said, '[t]he solidarity came from punk[s] and anarchist[s] around [the] globe. And friends here were helping [so] much, so I can keep my energy

[202] George Katsiaficas, *Asia's Unknown Uprisings. Volume 2. People Power in the Philippines, Burma, Tibet, China, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, and Indonesia, 1947-2009*, (Oakland: PM Press, 2013), p. 353
[203] The Unrest Collective remain very active, describing themselves as 'a media collective disseminating information in English and Indonesian languages about human rights and justice for all life destroyed by the industrialised capitalist system.' (https://unrestcollective.wordpress.com/ [accessed 26th November 2015])
[204] The Unrest Collective, *Farm Or Die. The ongoing struggle of farmers in Indonesia against corporate mining that will devastate their land*, no. 1, (Kulon Progo), (Bandung: DIY zine, 2012)

as I have it before.'[205] So punks are involved in anarchist activism of various forms, and link this to critiques of neo-liberal capitalism.

Fig. 2.52 – Disform sticker in Jakarta.

So, as with the UK and Poland, the relationship between anarchism and punk in Indonesia is by no means straightforward. While there is some similarity in the range of activisms engaged with by punk scenes in all three contexts, and while anarchism remains a strong and hugely influential connection, the Indonesian context differs somewhat from those prevalent in the UK or Poland. Nonetheless, punk in all three contexts is associated with a *spectrum of anarchist activisms*, not just typically 'lifestylist' examples, and including those which are ordinarily understood as being 'workerist.'

Anti-fascist and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism have been identified in all three contexts as strong points of connection between punk and anarchism. However, these two forms of activism might be considered as sharing few common features, with anti-fascism being stereotyped as militant and macho, and animal liberation/food sovereignty activism as being cultural, 'lifestylist' or even hippie. This points to punk's engagement with a wide range of activisms, despite being characterised as being associated with a fairly narrow range of 'lifestylist' activisms, and that has certainly been shown to be the case above. But there are even significant overlaps and engagements between activisms as apparently diverse as 'proper' anti-fascist activism or 'workerist' support for industrial struggles, and 'cultural' or 'lifestylist' activisms such as animal liberation/food sovereignty and squatting. As M. Testa writes, the group Anti-Fascist Action in Ireland 'linked-up' with hunt saboteur groups,[206] with a shared class analysis providing significant common ground, and in London a member of the anti-fascist group No Platform recalled doing 'security work for some large squat parties,'[207] again highlighting the close intermingling of supposedly separate anarchist activisms. As M. Testa puts it, a key aspect of anti-fascist activism is creating 'a *cultural* opposition to

[205] Anonymous interviewee.
[206] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 256
[207] Ibid. p. 295, quoting Dave Hann, *Physical Resistance: A Hundred Years of Anti-Fascism*, (London: Zero Books, 2013), p. 360-361

fascism,'[208] so not only do these 'diverse' activisms have significant practical overlaps, they also share common tactics, goals, and theoretical underpinnings. Punk's engagement with these activisms points to a basic falseness in the separation of anarchist activisms into discrete and incompatible 'types,' ranked as 'more anarchist' or 'less anarchist,' or 'political' and 'non-political.' This theme is also reflected in the discussion of punk's positioning across the 'lifestylist'/'workerist' dichotomy, discussed in Chapter 6.

Fig. 2.53 – 'Oppose! Corporate Crime.' Poster at InstitutA, Depok.

Fig. 2.54 – Black and red anarchist flag at a gig in Bandung (being used as a modesty curtain for the toilet).

Fig. 2.55 – Mural opposing 'Corporate Colonialism' in the Americas, at InstitutA, Depok.

[208] Testa, *Militant Anti-Fascism*, p. 201, [emphasis added]

Politicisation

Having demonstrated the overlaps between anarchism and punk in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, as well as raising some key issues and complications, attention will now be turned to the theme of politicisation. Across all three case studies the interviewees repeatedly described punk as a key element in their exposure and politicisation to anarchism. This is clearly of huge importance to the relationship between anarchism and punk, but also represents a strikingly similar theme across the UK, Poland, and Indonesia contexts, and as such all three contexts will be dealt with in combination here.

Türkeli notes the importance of anarchist politicisation in punk: 'Punk and especially post-punk, hardcore anarchist vegan scenes worldwide are not primarily important because of the artistic liberation they offer musicians but *mostly for the propagandising* of certain values and accompanying life styles.'[209] He continues: '[t]oday, punk has an international networking, propagandising, entertaining, socialising, even *recruiting position* in global anarchism. This level of punk-anarchism relations has not been documented and studied sufficiently yet.'[210] The current thesis will go some way to documenting and studying these 'punk-anarchism relations,' but Türkeli's point is clear – punk scenes are integral to the contemporary dynamics of the anarchist movement in several important ways. This section will focus on: punk's politicising role in terms of inspiration/exposure to anarchist politics; facilitation of punks into organised anarchist activism; the practical manifestation of anarchist politics that punk represents in its DIY ethos and the influence this has over the form of anarchist activisms. Portwood-Stacer also emphasises the importance of punk in relation to the contemporary anarchist movement, with her own research focus on the United States. She writes:

> The consumption of punk music, for instance, is a common factor in many anarchists' introduction to radical political ideologies and organising efforts. Many interviewees explicitly named punk artists and zines as the source of their first exposure to anarchist ideas. Several more referred to their participation in punk scenes as bringing them into contact with individuals whose political beliefs they found compelling. Listening to records, circulating zines, and attending punk shows are all consumption activities which may start out as a product of aesthetic preferences and end up producing political subjectivity and social networks.[211]

[209] Türkeli, *What is anarchism?* PhD Thesis, pp. 182-183, [emphasis added]
[210] Ibid. p. 182, [emphasis added]
[211] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, pp. 45-46

Portwood-Stacer points to the importance of punk in exposing people to anarchist politics, through zines, lyrics and imagery, but stresses that punk scenes also offer opportunities to meet people who are involved in various types of activism (including the range of activisms discussed above), which opens up avenues for people to become involved in anarchist activism themselves. The CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective in the US have their roots in the punk scene, so it is perhaps unsurprising that they concur with Portwood-Stacer and Türkeli, writing that: 'It's no secret that a great proportion of those currently active in anarchist circles have at some point been part of the punk counterculture; indeed many were first exposed to anarchist ideas via punk.'[212] CrimethInc. argue that this can be viewed as 'merely circumstantial: the same traits that make people seek out anarchism also predispose them to enjoy aggressive, independently produced music,' but it might also be 'that there has been something *intrinsically* subversive about punk.'[213] The understanding of punk as intrinsically subversive, or anarchistic, was discussed above, and while punk has not been, and is not, associated solely with anarchist politics, the continuing pervasiveness of the relationship between anarchism and punk supports the idea that punk is *in itself* anarchistic.

As demonstrated above, the connection between anarchism and punk goes beyond, and is much more complex than, a sense of anarchic compatability. Three areas of politicisation – exposure, facilitation, and manifestation – will be explored, again drawing heavily on the interview material from the UK, Poland, and Indonesia. The interviewees' responses in this regard were strikingly similar across the three contexts, so it makes sense to consider them all together, partly to avoid repetition, but also to highlight a salient connection between anarchism and punk that extends across the case studies with remarkably consistency.

- **Exposure and inspiration**

Penny Rimbaud writes that the 'more important' impact of Crass:

> was that more and more people were being exposed to the one essential message of our work: 'there is no authority but yourself'. We had created an outlet for ideas and information which, apart from the small anarchist presses, had hitherto been unavailable. Armchair anarchy was at last being forced out into the street.[214]

[212] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 7, p. 69
[213] Ibid.
[214] Rimbaud, *Shibboleth*, p. 125

Ian Glasper stresses the important impact of this exposure to anarchist politics: 'Anarcho punk truly empowered all it touched, encouraging every last one of us to take control of our own destinies before it was too late.'[215] Several interviewees in the UK were absolutely explicit about punk's politicising role. Adam noted the importance of the exposure to anarchism that punk provided for him: 'I basically started reading more about it [anarchism], *the music introduced me to that*, y'know, it piqued my curiosity.'[216] This was also expressed by interviewees in Poland. While Krzysztof asserted that he 'was born anarchist [laughs], always,' others clearly recognised punk's politicising role, and, like Adam in the UK, acknowledged punk's role in exposing them to anarchist politics. As Mateusz described, the 'punk rock scene is big impact for me … I take from it quite a lot of inspiration from the lyrics of bands.' Kasia recognised 'a message' in punk which was central to her own politicisation. She said, 'the punk scene … was always really … important, and probably … if I would move back to when I was a young punk, maybe if I wasn't, I wouldn't be here [Rozbrat squat], y'know? … Yeh I would say it's really important!' She continued, saying, 'I think punk scene/hardcore scene … really is a big influence, because … y'know, music scene in general is the only scene with that kind of message.' Adrian echoed this, saying:

> the message was quite clear and I liked the egalitarian, libertarian, feminist message … I think it's great there is a subculture which teaches kids [these] kinds of things, and not that you should go to a party get pissed drunk, fuck someone and don't give a fuck. It's not the most scientific language, but yeh, you're the scientist, I don't have to care about that.

Marta, despite distancing herself from the punk scene in general, recognised the inspirational aspect of punk, which for her 'creates like really strong and intense feelings, that push me to do some things.' Artur, though retrospectively critical of it, described his youthful 'fetishising' of bands' lyrics:

> [the] first impression was the energy coming from the music, and from the lyrics as well, and … then I got to know how it works yeh? Because as I said, first bands were more like mainstream bands that didn't have that much connection with like underground scene … and first was all the slogans.

A significant proportion of people currently involved with the anarchist movement in Poland had come from the punk scene, even if many of those people are not actively involved in punk any longer. As Mateusz said, '[t]he majority was previously in punk rock scene I would say, but many years [ago].' Natalia, discussing the *Federacja Anarchistyczna* [Anarchist Federation] agreed, saying,

[215] Glasper, *The Day the Country Died*, p. 9
[216] [emphasis added]

'I think about the older ones from our group … *almost all of them* was some kind of punks.'[217] In Indonesia too, the exposure to anarchist politics through punk was highlighted as being of key importance by the interviewees. As Arief put it: 'punk was my main factor in making me as an anarchist. Firstly I know about anarchism in zines and punk bands' lyrics.' However, several interviewees also described getting interested in anarchism before their involvement in the punk scene. Nadya in Bandung said her exposure to anarchism was not through punk, but 'because [of] what I read and … from my knowledge.'[218] Eka, likewise, said, 'the way that I encounter[ed] anarchism was not from the punk movement, because before when I was still in my university I was kind of involved with this student movement thing.' Eka became disenchanted with the Marxist-Leninist emphasis of the student movement and their 'really shitty hierarchy and organisation and like really dirty politics' and 'began to study by myself, like finding some literatures, and then I see zines and some books, and then it brings me to [a] deeper search of this.' So while Eka's exposure to anarchism had come through study, punk zines played an important part in distinguishing her politics from the 'mainstream' of student Marxist-Leninism.

In the UK, interviewee Jon was exposed to anarchist politics by punk. In recognition of that politicising role, and with a desire to offer the same opportunity to others, Jon began a music and book distro in the 1980s, which still operates today, called Active Distribution. He said he started the distro because he:

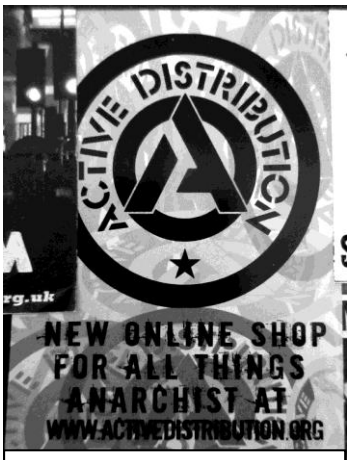

Fig. 2.56 – Active Distribution sticker.

> really wanted to communicate all that stuff, those [anarchist] ideas, and I wanted to make some money for the hunt sabs selling the tapes, and I wanted to get more people interested in going hunt sabbing, and also doing the maga[zine], the paper, and all the other stuff which we were doing.

He described his effort to expose punks (and anyone else) to anarchist literature, beyond the vague introductions provided by anarcho-punk lyrics:

> It wasn't just leaflets [but] actually kind of stuff which showed there was genuine kind of philosophy … general thought and ideas and things. So selling loads of books which I found interesting, like *Mutual Aid*, Freedom titles … but doing them cheap so people have got no excuse not to buy them [laughs] … 'Cause I kind of realised y'know, people aren't gonna buy a book that costs

[217] [emphasis added]
[218] Interview conducted 28/09/2012

> more than a pint … Or even if you just get cheap stuff, really cheap stuff you can say, 'look if you haven't got the money you can take this anyway.'

The issue of price will be picked up in more detail in Chapter 6. Ramsay Kanaan, singer with the punk band Political Asylum, started AK Press with similar motivations at around the same time, later going on to help found PM Press as well. So there was, and is, a clear emphasis on disseminating anarchist literature and ideas around the punk scene. Politicisation is recognised by participants as a crucially important aspect of the scene, and there is a clear desire to expose others to, and inspire them with, anarchist political philosophy.

- **Facilitation**

As Portwood-Stacer notes in her analysis of the US:

> an interest and involvement in anarchism ends up extending beyond just listening to punk music or reading CrimethInc. books or wearing circle-A patches, though these subcultural consumption habits serve as an initial introduction to anarchist ideas … it's not the case that commercial exposure necessarily *precludes* political activism in other forms.[219]

CrimethInc. are of particular interest here, because of their close engagement with punk.[220] Several CrimethInc. contributors have been in prominent punk bands such as Catharsis and Zegota, and as Sandra Jeppesen notes: 'CrimethInc. also makes a direct connection between punk shows and social protest, referring to "the passionate music and social criticism of punk 'culture'".'[221] Jeppesen argues that CrimethInc. texts 'provide a path from punk, an anti-corporate music and fashion-based subculture, to becoming activists through an engaged political philosophy.'[222] So punk and punk-engaged anarchisms not only expose people to anarchist ideas, they also facilitate active involvement in the anarchist movement. The interviewees noted this dynamic as well. In Indonesia CrimethInc. was particularly influential. The InstitutA infoshop had several CrimethInc. publications, posters and stickers on display. However, Eka stressed that:

[219] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 48
[220] An in-depth analysis of CrimethInc.'s anarchism, their association with punk, and criticisms of them will be a key aspect in discussion of the tensions between 'workerism' and 'lifestylism,' which follows the case studies in Chapter 6.
[221] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 28
[222] Ibid. p. 25

everybody comes from different [directions], some friends start from traditional … really old thinkers, and some like more like the CrimethInc. … Some thinkers and theor[ies] … don't fit here, or in a total different reality. Like some ideas from CrimethInc. it's not applicable here … we read like really different and various source[s].

Fig. 2.57 – Several CrimethInc. posters at InstitutA, Depok.

But while InstitutA draws from a variety of sources in terms of their anarchism, CrimethInc. material is prominent, and InstitutA, like CrimethInc., has its roots in the punk scene. It makes sense that CrimethInc. would appeal to an anarchist group which is associated with punk, because of a shared punk sensibility, punky aesthetics, and familiar tropes. As Jeppesen suggests, CrimethInc. 'provide a path' – in the UK, Jack described how punk music facilitated his path to engagement with organised anarchist groups:

> I would buy-up everything that came out on Crass [Records], that I could get hold of, and there would be little things in there saying 'contact [such-and-such] if you want to get involved.' So I'd write off to people and … I first got really in touch with anarchists through a magazine called *Peace News*.

Adam made use of the same route from punk to engagement and activism. He remembered 'getting albums that had contact addresses for different ... anarchist groups and organisations. That [was] the first step in terms of looking at anarchism more politically. Y'know, as opposed to just listening to music that I liked and I identified with, and I agreed with a lot of':

> I think the first group we got in touch with, or started reading stuff by, was Class War. And we woulda went into Just Books[223] and got copies of *Class War*, and *Freedom* at the time

[223] Just Books was a radical bookshop found by the Belfast Anarchist Collective in 1978. Their Winetavern Street premises closed in 1994, but the collective continues to operate to this day. Just Books were also behind the A-Centre, which hosted some of Belfast's first punk gigs, and invited anarcho-punk bands such as Crass and Poison Girls to play in the late-1970s, as will be discussed later.

> as well, and *Direct Action* by the Direct Action Movement [DAM] … who are now SolFed. And from that we found out that there were actually a handful of other people in the north [of Ireland] that y'know, had tried to do stuff in the past, y'know, that were anarchist at the time.

So punk encouraged Adam to engage with a wide range of anarchist groups, including 'punky' groups like Class War Federation, but *also* 'old guard' anarchist groups such as Freedom, and anarcho-syndicalists such as DAM. Again, this points to punk's engagement with a whole spectrum of different anarchist emphases, and indeed, to a connection to political concerns identified as 'workerist.' The issue of punk's relationship to 'old guard' anarchisms will be explored further in Chapter 6, especially from the perspective of Class War and CrimethInc.

In Poland too, the facilitation towards anarchist engagement through punk was recognised, with Szymon describing punk as 'a school' for anarchism. Punk zines are an important medium for spreading anarchist ideas. Artur recalled 'read[ing] … some fanzines that also had of course articles and general information about what's going on in Poland.' So in addition to the expected band information, record reviews, anarchist politics etc. there was also information about current activism and activist groups. Mateusz pointed to the presence of anarchist groups at punk festivals as an important influence, saying, 'for example in Poland … there are quite a lot of … festivals, punk rock festivals, and except the music there are also some workshops, some discussions … other themes than music, where you can learn quite a lot of nice stuff.' Mateusz also described being exposed to anarchism via punk at Rozbrat squat in Poznań: 'Before I went to the first concert I got already some texts, some articles, from one guy from the Rozbrat … Short articles about local activity of this anarchist movement, yeh that were distributed by Rozbrat, by Anarchist Federation.' From there, Mateusz 'started to participate in

Fig. 2.58 – The anarchist library at Rozbrat, Poznań.

Anarchist Federation … and then I organise[d] some action[s] by myself, yeh like Food Not Bombs actions and some concerts, some discussions, speeches, something like that.' Food Not Bombs itself was viewed as an introduction to activism by several interviewees. As Mateusz put it:

> Sometimes we call Food Not Bombs action the first step … to get involved in anarchist movement, because a lot of us [who] are now active, they started their activity in Food Not Bombs action. Because it was quite easy … to cut all these vegetables … or to prepare the meal and so on, and afterwards people were starting to do other things, other activity.

Mateusz's politicisation was mirrored by several other interviewees. Natalia described her journey as a 'very simple story': 'About fifteen years ago there was some concerts and punk concerts and then I meet some people … I met one person … and he was living on Rozbrat. I talked to him a few times in that pub, and so he invite[d] me to the meeting of *Federacja Anarchistyczna*.' As Natalia points out, the personal, face-to-face interaction with people involved in anarchist activism is a crucial aspect of politicisation. For Marta too: 'the first stuff that I did that [was] political or kind of attached to anarchism was with the people from the punk scene.'

So, clearly punk is an important site of engagement in anarchist activism for many people, with the overlap in membership of punk scenes and activist anarchist groups (as discussed above) providing numerous contact opportunities for those inspired by anarchist political philosophy to become involved in activism themselves.

- **Practical politics/DIY as 'anarchism in action'**

Judi Bari argues that '[m]usic is a really good organising tool. It gives the whole thing a kind of spirit; it really fuels the movement in a lot of ways.'[224] Türkeli, discussing punk and anarchism in particular, writes that '[m]usic bands and gigs eventually play a significant role in anarchist organising and *this is reflected in the changing nature of demos as well*.'[225] Steven Taylor describes the punk influence over demonstrations that Türkeli suggests:

> in the youth-driven antiglobalisation movement of the new millennium. Many of the 100,000-plus demonstrators who converged on Genoa in July 2001 to protest the G8

[224] Ron Sakolsky, 'Timber!: An interview with Judi Bari (7 November 1994),' in *Sounding Off!*, p. 174
[225] Türkeli, *What is anarchism?* PhD thesis, pp. 182-183, [emphasis added]

> summit were born after punk's initial emergence, but their politics are in many ways a legacy of punk.[226]

CrimethInc. suggest the reason for punks' propensity to become involved in activism lies in their exposure to practical examples of anarchism, as manifested in punk. They write that '[t]hose who have been in or around punk bands already understand how an affinity group works; operating in decentralised networks and coordinating autonomous actions came naturally.'[227] As Martin-Iverson writes of his research into the Bandung scene in Indonesia, the BalKot collective there:

> [though] not an explicitly political organisation [uses] informal mode[s] of organising and consensus decision-making practices … informed by broadly anarchist values, influenced by connections to global DIY hardcore, anarcho-punk, and anti-capitalist activist networks.[228]

In Poland too, the operation of punk collectives was paramount in terms of politicisation. As Artur said, 'the first was the kind of impression and emotions … with the lyrics as well, and then it was *how it works*.'[229] Natalia recalled her first visit to Rozbrat squat: 'I was like in love [with] the place in Rozbrat, and [with] the kind of meeting, the way that people speak, the way that people decide [whether/how to do] something.' Mateusz echoed this:

> [T]he activity of the … members of the bands … It was … [a] big inspiration [from] their lyrics and so on, but their activity when I saw them on some demonstration or when I saw them organising something and the way that *they were doing it so DIY* … Yeh, it was the impact … it's more important for me … *not words but activity* … Both things are important, but it's activity, yeh it's a bigger inspiration, and in my opinion it's more important.[230]

Drew Robert Winter writes of the importance of 'doing rather saying' in the context of Food Not Bombs, which 'does not formally identity as … anarchist … Nor does it formally identify as an animal liberation organisation,' but has been able to spread anarchist and animal liberationist activism by 'showing rather than telling … [This is] key to FNB's success as an organisation in replicating itself, as well as the ethical ideas behind its founding, even though—and in fact precisely because—those ideas remain unnamed.'[231] Glasper points out that because punk participants are involved in a

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[226] Taylor, *False Prophet*, pp. 14-15
[227] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 7, p. 72
[228] Martin-Iverson, 'Running in circles,' conference paper, p. 3
[229] [emphasis added]
[230] [emphasis added]
[231] Winter, 'Doing Liberation,' in *Anarchism and Animal Liberation*, p. 61

manifestation of anarchism, they internalise those anarchistic values, and this has a lasting impact on them as people. He said that:

> people involved in the anarcho-punk scene … had stayed true to the commitments they made whilst in a punk band, y'know, twenty odd years ago, right through to the present day … In the hands of anarcho-punk I think we'd have a very healthy future for our kids, but unfortunately it was a minority movement, else we might not be in the situation we are today.[232]

In the UK Liam described the influence of his experiences as part of a DIY anarchist punk community on his everyday life:

> The main influence anarchism has in my life is [in] the way I operate with my friends primarily, even outside the [Warzone] collective. The way we organise, delegate and live, like, it's became quite a natural process thankfully, because of having a social centre, and just being used to open discussion and constructive criticism. It's something I've found really helpful. Being told you're wrong and accepting it and realising how to make shit better, within groups of people.

So, through involvement with anarchist punk collectives, anarchistic social relations have become normal for Liam. The practical experience of punk is thus *an education in anarchist ethics*. In Poland, Szymon echoed Liam's point, viewing this aspect of punk as essential to his own politicisation:

> Y'know, from my point of view, like when I'm really in [the] academic field right now, I cannot imagine being there without punk. Like all the history and all the way of thinking, and the empathy which I learned, and relations … and this whole DIY culture, and that [lesson is] 'we can do it if we want it.' So, without them I will be not where I am right now, and I think there's a lot of people in Poland who cannot be called by punkish, or even anarchist, but the background which they took from the punkish years … has a huge influence in their lives right now.

Kinga described a sense of progression of practical politics in her life: 'So it was, for example, being vegetarian first, and then vegan, and squatting, and [then] anarchy.' Practical experience of anarchistic organising leads people to internalise these values, in addition to the politicising effect of

[232] Ian Glasper interviewed in *The Day the Country Died*, Roy Wallace (dir.)

lyrics and imagery. Like Kinga, interviewee Rafa described a sense of progression in his politicisation, but in almost exactly the *reverse* order:

> When I came back to Warsaw after my travellings I met guys from Food Not Bombs … So I started to participate in this … and they're punk rockers, and I was not really into this music, y'know? And, some of them they were living on a squat, the Elba squat … They told me that this is like a whole movement y'know, like squatters and so on. So I was absolutely fascinated by it, and punk rock music y'know, the political bands they were singing about anarchy, about liberation, about y'know the global stuff, and y'know, it was so cool. So like slowly, when I was visiting the squat, I was y'know, get involved in these y'know actions. So after a while I just noticed that I'm listening [to] punk rock music [laughs] and this is very cool and this is like y'know, suddenly what I want to do.

So Rafa had already been exposed to anarchist politics elsewhere, but via a Food Not Bombs initiative he became interested and involved in the anarchist squatter scene, which in turn exposed him to punk music, which for Rafa was appealing since it reflected his political beliefs. The relationship between punk and anarchism is frequently perceived as a one-way exposure, or 'school' as Szymon had put it, but this reversed progression complicates the relationship, while also suggesting a stronger connection. Punk's example of 'anarchism in action' is a crucial aspect of its power to politicise people, giving practical manifestation to the inspiring lyrics, imagery and rhetoric.

- **Conclusion**

So punk clearly politicises people towards anarchism: by exposing them to anarchist ideas through zines, lyrics, and imagery; by facilitating people's engagement in anarchist activism; and by inculcating anarchist ethics through participation in a manifestation of anarchism in action. Jack in the UK recognised the politicising role of punk, saying, '[i]t's a definite factor' but pointed out that not everyone who had been exposed to anarchism through punk was as comfortable with that recognition. He said, 'I think some people will be in absolute denial about that, that punk was really that important to them, and other people will be like myself and say that "no, actually, it was of enormous importance."' This issue, where even people formerly involved in punk deny its significance to the anarchist movement, was, as described in the introduction, an early motivation for this current research and thesis, exposing as it did a sharp dissonance between my own lived experience and the opinion expressed by my anti-punk (ex-punk) comrade. This view has been identified in the case studies here as well, along with several other related, though complicating,

tensions. As will be expounded further in the remainder of the case studies, and discussed in Chapter 6, this dismissal of punk's influence is not uncommon in some anarchist circles, which perhaps in some sense necessitates this chapter as a means of demonstrating the connection between punk and anarchism beyond any doubt, before dealing with the complications that this relationship throws-up – yet the 'anti-punk' tension remains a key factor.

Once again, this is not to say that punk is the only politicising factor towards anarchism, nor should it be. As Arief in Indonesia argued, 'surely anarchism is more than just about punks':

> for myself, my political view now cannot [be] generalised into the punk culture. Surely I'm grateful to the punks who introduce[d] me into anarchism and other views, but also that the political awareness is for anyone who want[s] to open their minds, not only for the punks.

Punk's politicising role towards anarchism is experienced in very similar ways in each of the case studies. This consistency, across three different social, economic, cultural, and political contexts, suggests a very strong connection indeed between anarchism and punk.

Fig. 2.59 – Bandung Pyrate Punx logo from Krass Kepala, *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015).

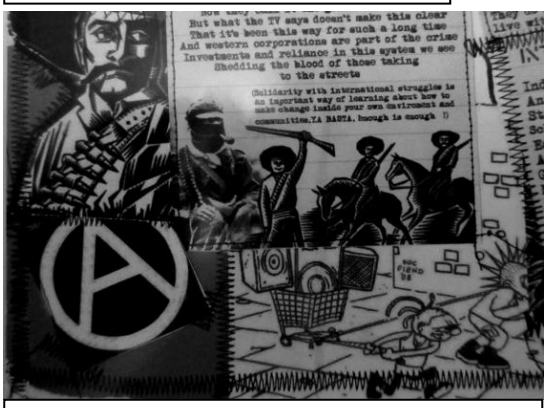

Fig. 2.60 – Anarchist and revolutionary imagery from lyric sheet of Autonomads, *No Mans Land*, (Mass Prod, Ruin Nation, Pumpkin, 2009).

Fig. 2.61 – Black and red anarchist flag (used as a curtain) at Rozbrat, Poznań.

Comparison of overlaps between punk and anarchism in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia

The existence of a *range* of significant connections between anarchism and punk is *irrefutable* across all three case studies. Despite the differing social and political backgrounds in which these punk scenes are situated, there are important commonalities in how the relationship between anarchism and punk is manifested in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, as well as interesting and important differences. In each case, the political association most prominently connected to punk is anarchism, as opposed to any form of vague 'leftism' or Marxist-Leninism (though of course other political engagements with punk exist, even including fascism). The engagements with anarchism in each context were explored, with a particular focus on anti-fascist and animal liberation/food sovereignty activisms.

Fig. 2.62 – Detail from back cover of *Angry Scenes vol. 5* compilation, (Angry Scenes, 2011).

Anti-fascism is a form of anarchist activism common to all three case studies, but the level and type of activism is different in each context. In the UK anti-racism has a long historical association with punk, with antifa emerging as a distinctly anarchist manifestation in the mid-2000s. The UK government is responsible for fascistic policies (and abuses), not least in its treatment of asylum seekers and other migrants, and the increasingly totalitarian nature of its surveillance state, but organised racist and fascist groups in the UK are generally a fringe concern operating almost exclusively on a subcultural level, with the notable exception of UKIP's recent electoral successes. As such the level of anti-fascist activity in the UK is relatively low, though increasing in correlation with perceived threat, and it remains a key concern within punk scenes, where anti-fascist imagery and lyrics are commonplace. In Poland, anti-fascism was an important reaction to the emergence of neo-Nazis in the 1990s, but has had renewed relevance with the resurgence of organised white-nationalist, racist, and fascist groups in the wake of the economic crash of 2008. The scale of the problem is much greater in Poland than in the UK, and as a result the level of anti-fascist activity is also greater. Indonesia's recent history of pseudo-fascist dictatorship means that anti-fascist groups emerged, not as part of a 'subcultural turf-war,' but in opposition to the government. As Vysotsky argues: 'conflicts that appear on the surface to be "culture wars" between or within sub-groups in contemporary society' may be more accurately described as 'social movement activity … intersected with lifestyle and identity formation, [through which] the politicisation of everyday practices generates unique

movement-countermovement dynamics in response to movement specific threats.'[233] Pilkington, Kosterina, and Omelchenko write that in the context of St. Petersburg in Russia, 'the ideas of the DIY-punk movement and the anti-fascist movement were closely interwoven since non-discrimination assumes an anti-fascist position. For this reason, some informants identified as antifascists participated in related protest and violent actions.'[234] So, anti-fascist activism can clearly be identified as anarchist, and its prevalence across all three case studies points to a strong connection with anarchism, and indeed similar anti-fascist imagery is utilised across the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, and across much of the rest of the world as well.

Animal liberation, veganism, and food sovereignty initiatives such as Food Not Bombs were also important themes in each of the case studies. Food Not Bombs chapters exist across the UK, Poland, and Indonesia, and operate in very similar ways in each context. Food Not Bombs originated in the US in 1980, but it has a very impressive global spread today, and is an excellent example of international anarchist activism with a close punk association. As Drew Robert Winter writes:

Fig. 2.63 – 'Go Vege!' sticker with 'Wagenburg Breslau' stencil (Breslau was the name for Wrocław before 1945.

> The anarchist principles of equality (as opposed to hierarchy), and solidarity (as opposed to charity) have allowed FNB chapters to spring up by the hundreds around the world without a central administration or budget, and the otherwise open-ended nature allows every chapter to articulate itself on its own terms and within their own situated context. This approach has allowed for an organic, bottom-up cultivation of unique but allied ventures, rather than a one-size-fits-all branch dictated from afar by a non-profit administration that is all too often subdued by the whims of its donors, bullied into submission by authorities, and insensitive to the myriad sociocultural forces that must be negotiated on the ground in each case. The result is a process (not an ideology) that unites animal liberation with a host of other issues much more readily championed by the Left.[235]

So, FNB, in its flexible transmission into locally 'situated contexts' acts as a manifestation of anarchist activism across the three case studies, providing another strong example of the relationship between anarchism and punk.

[233] Vysotsky, 'The influence of threat on tactical choices of militant anti-fascist activists,' p. 288
[234] Pilkington et al, 'DIY Youth Groups in Saint Petersburg Russia,' p. 137
[235] Winter, 'Doing Liberation,' in *Anarchism and Animal Liberation*, p. 60

In Indonesia however, aside from some of the activism around InstitutA, Food Not Bombs is among the *very few* instances of animal liberation/vegan activism, and a relatively very small proportion of the interviewees and scene participants were vegan or even just vegetarian. In Poland and the UK, veganism and animal rights are extremely prevalent themes, with a high proportion of interviewees and scene participants being vegan, social centres and squats operating on a vegan basis, animal liberation prominently featuring in lyrics, imagery, and zines (see Appendix 6), and significant numbers of punks being involved in animal liberation activism. O'Hara writes that '[t]he Punk philosophy tends to believe that the exploitation of animals is another step towards allowing the exploitation of people,'[236] suggesting an approach informed by an anarchist deployment of the theory of intersectionality. As Clarke argues:

> [b]eing punk is, in many ways, a way of critiquing privileges and a way of challenging social hierarchies. Contemporary punks are generally inspired by anarchism … For these people, food practices, in their everyday usage, mark consciously ideological moments: eating is a cauldron for the domination of states, races, genders, and ideologies and the practice through which these discourses are often resisted.[237]

> To be vegan in America [as in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia!] is to perpetually find oneself in the minority, chastised and excluded, challenged and reminded of one's difference. In this sense, veganism also served as an incessant critique of the Mainstream, marker of Otherness, and enactment of punk.[238]

So veganism, at least as far as punk is concerned, is an expression of anarchist politics, or at the very least it can be argued that the relationship between punk and animal liberation/veganism is most sensibly understood, and most consistently and strongly expressed, in connection with anarchism.[239] Veganism is less prevalent among punks in Indonesia, but where veganism *is* encountered it is usually among anarchist-engaged punks. So veganism as a 'punk norm' is problematised by its relative absence in the Indonesian context, but in that complication the connection between punk and anarchism is, in fact, reinforced.

Despite the variations between the case studies, the role of punk in politicising people towards anarchist politics is a clear and striking commonality between the UK, Poland, and Indonesia. This extends beyond the exposure to anarchist ideas in lyrics, imagery, and zines, to facilitating people to

[236] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 137
[237] Clark, 'The Raw and the Rotten,' p. 19
[238] Ibid. p. 25, [addition in square brackets is mine]
[239] See: Tilbürger and Kale, '*Nailing Descartes to the Wall*,' p. 1

become involved in anarchist activism. It was also the case that interviewees viewed punk as a form of anarchism in action, or a manifestation of anarchist principles, which inculcated anarchist ethics within its participants. The fact that any aspect of the relationship between anarchism and punk can be identified so uniformly across these divergent case study contexts clearly emphasises its salience.

The following three case study foci will examine several more key themes in greater detail, looking especially at feminism, squatting, repression, and religion, as well as examining DIY processes in punk, especially related to gigs. This chapter has laid the underpinning argument that punk and anarchism are, undeniably, closely related, and that *this relationship is crucially important to both anarchism and punk*. The case study foci will now explore that relationship in greater depth.

In summation, this chapter has made several key assertions, which are significant to the tensions and arguments examined in the rest of the thesis. These are:

- Punk is associated with a wide range of anarchist activisms. There *is* an especial emphasis on anti-fascism, animal liberation/food sovereignty activism, and squatting – but the association extends across a spectrum to also include prisoner support, ecological activism, support for industrial action and other workers' struggles, as well as 'lifestylist' concerns and expressions of individualism.
- The anarchism which emerges from punk is identified as being in some way distinct from pre-existing anarchisms. Though punk engagements with anarchism are diverse, it *is* possible to speak of a discernible 'punk-anarchism.'

Several of the tensions which are focussed upon in the rest of the thesis have already emerged in this chapter. The key questions so far raised are:

- Punk has been shown here to be engaged with stereotypically 'lifestylist' *and* 'workerist' activisms – so how is punk positioned across the tensions between these supposed 'polar extremes' of the contemporary anarchist movement?

And to go right back to the opening paragraphs of the thesis:

- Why do people who have been politicised to anarchism through punk reject this influence, and dismiss punk generally?

The case studies section will continue with three further chapters exploring each context in more detail, while examining some key themes. To state again, it is not argued that punk is necessary *or*

sufficient for anarchism, the relationship is more complicated than that – but, while punk is distinctive within the anarchist spectrum, *it is integral to it*.

Fig. 2.64 – Detail from the CD booklet of Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011).

Fig. 2.65 – Black and red anarchist flag flying from the roof of Odzysk squat in Poznań.

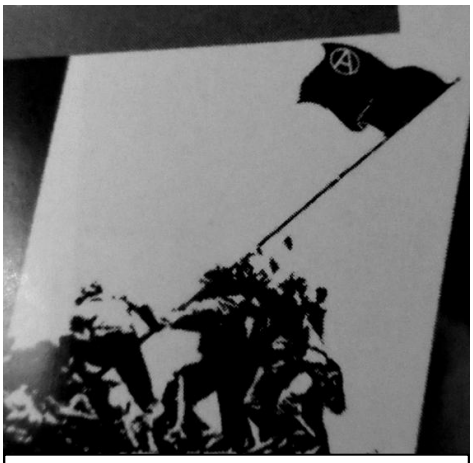

Fig. 2.66 – Detail from CD booklet of Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011).

Case Study Foci on the UK, Poland, and Indonesia (Chapters 3, 4, and 5)

This thesis gathers new ethnographic information to develop an understanding of contemporary punk scenes and their relationships to anarchism. The analysis of punk's relationship to anarchism is *grounded* in interviewee testimony and participant observation. The following three sections take each case study focus in turn. Each case study focus will begin with a short vignette of a gig in an effort to give some colour to the thick description and analysis, and to remind the reader that punk is a vital and exuberant culture with gigs holding a key role in the social, political and economic make-up of any punk scene. Several key issues emerge from the gig vignettes, which are then explored in detail and are compared with the other two case study contexts. The gig description in the UK sparks discussion of feminism, anarcha-feminism and sexism. The gig description in Poland leads to exploration of squats and autonomous social centres. The gig description in Indonesia opens into an examination of repression, and the particular role of religion in that. These foci have been selected because they say something important about punk's relationship with anarchism, and crucially, were the most important aspects to emerge in the course of the research.

CHAPTER 3. CASE STUDY FOCUS A – DIY PUNK IN THE UK: FEMINISM AND SEXISM

A gig in the UK

Cigarettes were crammed into ashtrays and pint glasses clinked back into their drinkers' possession, as word was sent round that the band had started. We filed past the bouncer's glowering frame and up the stairs, swapping the cool, but smoky, air of the 'beer garden' for the sweaty, boozy warmth inside. We flashed our coloured wristbands at the woman behind the table at the top of the stairs and pushed our way through the heavy double doors into the roaring din. The bar was packed tight – unusually so, in fact – a mixture of spiky punk-types and boisterous skinheads, with those near the stage jovially jostling about to the music, fists pumping the air in (near-)unison as the band belted-out the anthemic chorus: 'Keep the faith, c'mon stay true. The Oi! Oi! music's gonna pull you through.' A Runnin' Riot classic, but this time performed by Intensive Care from London – most bands at the festival did a Runnin' Riot cover, all in dedication to the memory of 'Big C.' Fans and friends had come from far and wide to pay tribute, people swapped stories, caught-up with some old faces, and raised their glasses into the air again-and-again (and again) toasting Colin's memory.

Colin Riot, singer of Belfast Oi! band Runnin' Riot, died on the 18th of August 2014 in the middle of a tour of the UK. In his memory, The Keep The Faith[1] festival took place in Belfast on the 23rd-24th May 2015, which would have been Colin's 47th birthday, and was also the anniversary of the death of Desi Cush, a punk who was killed on the streets of Belfast in 1999. The festival, which consisted of two all-dayer gigs, was held in a commercial bar on Belfast's Dublin Road and was co-organised by Colin's partner Nikki and the Warzone Collective. The line-up was more-or-less self-selecting, since Nikki had issued an open invitation on a social media platform, with those bands who first got in contact getting to play. The festival was organised as a benefit for the newly founded Colin Riot McQuillan Foundation and the Warzone Centre, and this was reflected in a mixing of anarcho-punk and skinhead Oi! in terms of the bands playing, aesthetic of attendees, and even the politics of the gig. The Warzone Collective are organised around an anarchist punk social centre (discussed in more detail in case study focus B (Chapter 4)) and espouse opposition to hierarchies and oppression from an anarchist perspective, while Nikki and the Colin Riot McQuillan Foundation stated that the festival should have 'no politics' with a focus on 'a weekend full of great craic … and a little bit of drunken revelry.'[2]

It was notable that of the 28 bands that played, only *one* had a single female member – Patrice, vocalist with ska band Aggressors B.C. Accounting for some people being in more than one band across the weekend, there were around 100 different people playing on-stage at the festival – and only one of the band members was a woman – one percent! And, while notable, this severe gender disparity is not uncommon at punk gigs, as will be discussed below. Of the gig attendees around 40-45% were women, and as mentioned, a woman called Nikki was a key organiser, along with several female members of the Warzone Collective. So while women were absent from the stage, they were only slightly outnumbered among the audience, and women were in active roles in terms of organising and promoting the gig, managing the door, and feeding bands. From first glance the festival line-up was obviously gender imbalanced in terms of 99% of the performers being men, but this was not reflected in the attendance or organisers of the festival. The lack of representation of women on stage might not have been of great concern to those associated with 'no politics' Nikki and the Colin Riot McQuillan Foundation, but certainly sits at odds with the Warzone Collective's anarchist ethos. This raises some interesting and problematic issues, since, if punk is understood to have a close relationship with anarchism, this ought to indicate an opposition to patriarchy and sexism. While this opposition is very often clearly stated, and numerous feminist punk interventions

[1] 'Keep The Faith' is a popular Northern Soul slogan, and is the title of a Runnin' Riot song from *Reclaim the Streets*, (TKO records, 2001).
[2] Keep The Faith festival Facebook event page: https://www.facebook.com/events/1515549488729122/ [accessed 26th November 2015]

exist, gigs like the Keep The Faith festival point to a persisting lack of representation of women on stage, even as they occupy active roles 'behind the scenes.' The issues around feminism and sexism will be explored in depth below.

DIY punk in action in the UK

Punk scenes revolve around gigs. They are a central social event, as well as an important manifestation of DIY production practices, and a key site of politicisation (as described above). Liam, a gig promoter and member of the Warzone Collective, described the importance of gigs to punk scenes and punk culture generally:

> [Gigs are] the focal point of our community … So everything stems from DIY. It's how you make it accessible for people, it's how we socialise and interact with each other. It exposes people to … your ideology and new ways of thinking and stuff … Y'know, music's important, it always has been … *and it's fun*. Like bottom-line is going to a gig, like having a few beers with your friends, and listening to some music, it's like my ideal night out … [W]hat else are you gonna be doing with your time?

Adam, also from Belfast, agreed with the social importance of gigs, saying, 'the punk thing was always there for me, the music was important. I would go to gigs whenever I could, and knock about with these people.' Jon Active in London pointed to the shared ethos of anarchist punk, and the gig's role in embodying and communicating that: 'I'm not saying gigs at squats, or gigs at anarcho-punk things are necessarily ideal little havens, but just y'know, it's just nice to know that y'know, that when you go places like that, there are certain kind of values which people share.' Katie, also in London, echoed this, saying, 'when you're in a "punk" gig or an "alternative" gig, you've mostly got like-minded people around you who are already clued-in to the myth of the state and understand where you're coming from.' Jon used to organise gigs himself, saying that

Fig. 3.1 – Sticker of Pumpkin Records, DIY label.

he 'would only do things either in squats or at [a] cool kind of community … centre nearby, where I used to do most of the gigs I did. And it was like y'know, that was where I wanted to be operating.' He lamented the decline of punk gigs in squats in the UK (discussed further in the following case study focus), comparing it negatively with 'gigs nowadays. And who the fuck are doing [squat gigs]? Y'know, nothing. And they're playing just bullshit fucking venues. Just normal commercial type venues,' as, indeed, was the location for the Keep The Faith festival in Belfast.

There are numerous anarchist social centres across the UK which have strong connections with punk, helping to replace *some* of the functions which squats used to perform (as discussed later). However, the necessity of having to hold gigs in commercial venues is an inconvenient, and often unpleasant, reality for most punk scenes. Liam in Belfast described the impact of the closure of Giros, the previous incarnation of the Warzone Collective's social centre, in 2002:

> [T]hen the gigs moved over to the Front Page [a nearby commercial bar] which was sorta my first real experience of being in bars. And it was a noticeable change to how you had to act, and financially even being able to go to gigs was a big difference, 'cause obviously when you're younger you just have no income or y'know, and your priorities are totally different 'cause instead of watching the band I would've preferred to get drunk.

As well as experiencing the abrupt increase of cost of admission and alcohol, and unfamiliar expectations of behaviour as a punter, Liam also described how the process of organising and promoting gigs was made more difficult and costly, and discusses the derisory treatment at the hands of commercial venue managers and security staff:

> Like where we're sitting here [a commercial bar on Belfast's Ormeau Road], like the reason the bouncer keeps giving me dirty looks is from … the last Nuclear Winter Fest, where like even as the promoter they made me stand and eat a pasty bap out in the street 'cause you're not allowed to bring food in. Like, that's how pissly treated you were, even when you were making places money … [I]t wasn't like a great time in the scene … there was no focal point … I started getting a bit just pissed off with it, 'cause I didn't feel like there was a point in doing any of it. Like, to be treated like shit to make somebody else money … to have no art or passion or anything with it. Just a gig, which you could maybe make enough to like pay the soundman and the touring band or whatever … It's just piss-weak.

The authoritarian and petty behaviour of most door security staff (bouncers) clearly annoyed Liam, and as interviewee Ryan describes in case study focus (b), punks were, and are, especially harassed

on the basis of their appearance. Liam said, 'this was at a time where [with] alotta bars … punk wasn't a popular thing … it was like a dirty word.' And as an added insult, these commercial bars expect the organiser of the gig to pay for the use of bouncers, in addition to room hire and paying someone to set-up the PA system. These costs inevitably end up being passed-on to gig attendees with higher admission charges, making gigs less affordable, while also making it more difficult to pay touring bands, and usually impossible to pay local support bands.

Despite the added financial and organisational difficulties of using commercial venues, the DIY ethic remains key to punk gigs in the UK. Liam, when asked to define DIY, replied, 'the real question is: where's the dividing line between exploiting a scene and … just being *in* a scene for life.' For the interviewees in the UK, the question of whether or not a gig organiser/promoter is exploiting the scene is frequently measured by costs and profit-margins. Tommy, who organises gigs in London, emphasised this:

> When I put on the events, like North London punx picnic, I think *the most important thing* is the door price. Keep it as low as possible, and if you can't afford certain bands because of that, then don't get certain bands. Get the bands that you can afford. That's my main thing when I put on the DIY gigs, just make sure you don't charge the punters too much, keep it as low as possible.[3]

George, who produces a regular 'anarcho-absurdist' punk zine, also seeks to keep prices low. He said, 'I think that's what DIY punk did was give us the tools to express ourselves, and cheaply as well … Economics was a big thing, and still is y'know. When I'm putting a fanzine together now I try and keep it to a magic 50p.' Oisín, in London, described the same emphasis on keeping prices low from the perspective of playing in a band and selling merchandise:

> You see, we go out and [the band] have always [tried to] sell t-shirts and sell CDs as cheap as we can … Like half the time … we'll say like '£7 for a t-shirt,' they go 'well I've got £4,' 'yeh alright then, that'll do,' d'y'know what I mean? We're not businessmen if you know what I mean … I'm not in punk music … to make money, but, I just wanna do it for fun, and … I'd like people to be able to afford to buy our shit.

Oisín contrasted this with bands at 'big gigs … selling t-shirts for £15. It's like, hang on, these fucking t-shirts cost you the same three or four quid as it cost us to make ours, and we're selling them for five, six, seven quid, y'know.' In terms of payment for playing gigs, Oisín again stressed an emphasis on minimising costs and profits. 'We always say we'll do gigs for diesel and beer':

[3] [emphasis added]

> If you can cover our diesel and get us a few beers then we'll quite happily drive anywhere in the country to do a gig. But unfortunately like the price of diesel is quite a lot at the moment, so if we realistically wanna go [from London] and play a gig in Bristol we kinda need about 120, 150 quid just to cover ourselves.

Liam discussed paying bands from a promoter's perspective. He said that even if a gig fails to raise enough funds to cover the travelling band's costs – which is often agreed prior to the gig in the form of a 'guarantee' – 'normally bands are quite reasonable, you can make an agreement with them to recoup the money, or most bands are happy … if everything's been done right, y'know like, good promotion, y'know, and they realise that it's just a poor turnout.' Bands share in the DIY ethos too, as Liam puts it: 'look, I mean the bands we put on are punk bands, and they realise that they're playing in a social centre, they don't generally want to take away from that. Generally, they're just happy to be included in the community.' The typical costs that need to be 'covered' include: fuel and vehicle costs for travelling bands; recording, production, shipping and distribution costs for merchandise; food, beer, promotion materials, venue, bouncer, and PA hire for gig promoters; printing and distribution costs for zinesters. In most cases, these 'services' are provided by private commercial companies with no association to the punk scene, and of course they take a profit. This can be viewed as a significant and oft-repeated compromise. The cost of DIY events or merchandise is *usually* mostly comprised of the costs paid to private commercial companies at some point in the production process. People *in* the punk scene, such as bands, gig promoters, zine producers, etc. usually do not seek any payment beyond covering their expenses. George described the avoidance of profit in DIY punk:

> There is that anti-capitalist thing, yeh, inherent in DIY punk. 'Pay No More Than,' which was a mixture of sort of anti-capitalism, but also sort of naïvety about how much things cost sometimes as well. And accidentally losing lots of money on stuff, yeh, there is a kind of a shyness about making money … Other parts of society don't have that shyness.

Fig. 3.2 – Detail from Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011).

Jon pointed out that this anti-profit ethic was sometimes quite strictly enforced, with anyone in the punk scene who overcame their 'shyness' about making money facing reprimand, boycott or exclusion: 'There was a time when DIY, hardcore DIY, was very very kinda like anti-profit … You

could not add anything onto the price that you got something for, otherwise you were *a total sell-out*.'[4] The question of what constitutes 'selling-out' in DIY punk is interesting and informative, and will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 6. Oisín gave the example of the T-Chances Community Centre in Tottenham: 'They really do run things like not for profit at all, so that's kinda, kinda really good. So all the money off the door goes to pay the bands or the benefit, or whatever it's for, y'know. So, yeh, that's a good thing.' At the Warzone Centre in Belfast, Liam said, 'we only have one paid position, which is the soundman position, because … those people aren't necessarily involved with the Collective … [W]e've always had it as a paid role and that's the only one.' Tommy, who often organises gigs in T-Chances, discussed his usual approach to payment and money at gigs:

> The way I do it, I don't make any money out of it, and all my gigs are benefit gigs. And I keep the door prices as low as possible, and to do that you have to book bands that don't ask a lot of money. The gigs I do I just pay travel really for travelling bands, so, don't really pay any of the [local] bands, y'know. I'd tell them at first, I'll say 'look y'know I'm putting on this event, I'm not gonna give you any money, but if you wanna play it, fine, if you don't then we'll get another band.' So, that's how it works, and there's always some bands out there that wanna play.

So, local bands often play gigs for no remuneration at all, and as Liam points out these locals bands are often 'bringing their own equipment to support [travelling] bands say, where they go to play a show where they very rarely get paid.' Any money from Tommy's gigs, like many DIY punk gigs generally, go to various benefit causes, as discussed above – though this also has the practical benefit of taking emphasis away from making profits in order to pay bands. Liam, similarly to Tommy, said, 'I never take money from gigs I put on. Even when we could've, because I never felt like I was doing that much work, just organising it.' However, he was not strictly opposed to other gig promoters being paid, or paying themselves: 'That's not saying like … "DIY punk bands shouldn't make money," like you shouldn't be able to make a living out of it. And that's an entirely huge discussion in itself, where you draw the lines on that, with bigger punk bands':

> I have no disagreement with people taking money from promoting gigs, because if it's done well it can be a very difficult, time-consuming job. I know alotta good promoters in the city that really bust their balls 'cause they're passionate about the scene. And like if they wanna take like what minimal amount of money, y'know, get a bit of shopping or whatever, I mean we're not talking about millions here, y'know … As long as people aren't

[4] [emphasis added]

> ripping off the scene, I think it's fine. There's good promoters and there's bad promoters. It's like anywhere.

Differing interpretations of DIY and attitudes to money-making emerge already here. Jon identified the annual Rebellion punk festival (formerly known as Holidays in the Sun and Wasted) as a *non*-DIY event:

> That kind of thing just proves how dissolute the whole thing has gotten. Ah, y'know some people, which I won't name, have argued that … the Rebellion festival is a DIY fucking organisation, and they're 'doing the right thing' and it's all for a good fucking cause. I mean what the fuck? Y'know? It's so fucking not, and y'know I find it just sad and sad and sad, that so many bands are playing there without the critique of that organisation. It's quite obvious they're playing it because there's loads of people there and they're getting loads of money, or at least some of the bands are getting loads of money. And if not, y'know, they can sell loads of merch, and if not they can just get themselves known, and it's a big fuckin' party. It's like, well, bollocks to that, y'know. We should be organising our own fuckin' things.

So DIY is understood as anti-profit or at least concerned with minimising profits and costs, as a means to reducing the influence of capitalist economic *and social* relations. The extent to which the tactic is successful, and its relationship to anarchist politics, will be discussed further in Chapter 6. However, DIY is not just an economic/financial ethic. Jack emphasised the empowering aspect of DIY: 'I liked the fact that it was all … under our control, in a sense … if we wanted to do something, like put on a gig, or produce a fanzine, then we could just do it.' This sense of empowerment in DIY is echoed in the discussion of squatting activism in the following case study focus B (Chapter 4). DIY ethics and practices encourage people to act for themselves, on their own behalf and at their own behest, and are understood as prefigurative direct action by anarchists such as Colin Ward.

George from Liverpool said:

> another thing about punk is there's no distance between the audience and the band, so, yeh, I once saw HR from Bad Brains playing in Liverpool and I just, the guy's in the bar, so I sat and chatted to him. I was really drunk at the time, he wasn't very amused, but y'know.

Jack also pointed to the political importance of DIY: 'it seems to me at least, from where I'm sitting, that it is very, very politically conscious, aware, involved, engaged and so forth. And that's really exciting.' The politicising effect of DIY gigs was discussed above.

Grace, who organises gigs in the West Midlands, described her approach as 'DIY by accident,' but pointed to the political significance of operating in this way:

> Now I totally subscribe to all these DIY ideals, 'cause I've learned a load of stuff from punk … I suppose what I do know is I think about it differently, I put more effort into running gigs that are diverse, gigs that are accessible to kind of people with disabilities, and people with particular gender identities and stuff, gigs that aren't entirely white spaces. These are things I suppose I've just built upon, these very mechanical ideas I had before about how to make a gig work, and so it's become something more, through discovering DIY politics and punk politics.[5]

Grace's comments (re)raise another key observation from the vignette of the Keep The Faith gig in Belfast, above. If punk is understood to be politically engaged, and if that politics is understood to be informed by anarchism, then an emphasis on diversity, as Grace mentions, or at least an effort to avoid potentially oppressive norms should be part of that. Gigs, as a central focus of punk scenes, are an important context in which the politics of these scenes are manifested. As a reminder, at the Keep The Faith festival only *one* percent of the performers was female, despite women occupying important roles in organising and promoting the gig. There is a clear dissonance here, examination of which will speak usefully to the wider relationship between anarchism and punk.

Punk, feminism, anarcha-feminism, and sexism in the UK

The veracity of the connection between anarchism and punk has already been made clear in the previous chapter, however, as suggested, the relationship between anarchism and punk is not straightforward. Anarchism is concerned with opposing hierarchy and domination in society, seeking to challenge oppressions in whatever form they exist. As such patriarchy is (or ought to be) of prime concern for anarchists, which is most obviously explicated in anarcha-feminist theory and activism. If punk is argued to be anarchist, or to be closely related to anarchism, then it can be expected that punk will also be concerned with gender equality and feminism. But while punk rhetoric often presents an anti-sexist posture it remains a highly imperfect vehicle for feminism, even taking into consideration the contributions of anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl. It will be informative, then, to consider punk's approach to patriarchy and feminism, using an anarcha-feminist perspective.

[5] Interview conducted 18/12/2013

Feminism has been a resurgent theme in UK punk over the last few years, with various interventions into (or against) the frequently male-centric punk norm. Feminism and sexism were recurrent themes throughout many of the UK interviews, and interviews were conducted with several women involved in the contemporary UK punk scene who are specifically engaged with feminist activism. Indeed the number of women among the interviewees in the UK was highest out of the three case studies – seven out of seventeen interviewees, compared with five out of eighteen in Poland and just six out of 37 in Indonesia. In terms of methodology, the interviews with women in Indonesia and Poland were reliant on the opportunity to do so through chance encounter, so the ratio of women interviewees very roughly correlates to the number of women in the punk scenes there. In the UK there was less reliance on chance encounter, and women in punk were actively sought-out to address an early male bias in the interview sample, and to combat a general focus on men in punk scholarship more widely. The male bias that emerged in the early interviewee selections might be explained by unthinking sexism on my own part, as a result of having more male contacts in the punk scene reflecting the gender disparity that exists, or as a re-expression of the male bias apparent in other scholarly analyses of punk. As Lauraine Leblanc notes: 'historians and chroniclers of the punk subculture tend to focus on … (mostly male) band members, (male) promoters, (male) club owners, and (male) record company executives. In all these texts, women and girls appear only in glimpses, in the margins of the marginal.'[6] Clearly it is important to make every effort to avoid the retrenchment of this marginalisation of women in punk by *some* historians and sociologists. And in any case, women *are present* in punk scenes. Redress of the early imbalance in the interviewee 'gender ratio' was important in order to reflect the actual experience of UK punk scenes. Not only is this important in terms of the wider methodology of the thesis, informed as it is by grounded theory and an emphasis on giving voice to scene participants, but the issue of feminism also speaks to the relationship between anarchism and punk. This does not mean that an insignificant minority niche of punk is being given undue consideration as some kind of positive discrimination – as stated, feminism is a major theme in UK punk today, and exploration of it contributes usefully to the overarching investigation into the relationship between anarchism and punk, while reflecting the contemporary UK punk scene.

[6] Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk*, pp. 33-34

- **Anarchism and feminism**

It is not argued here that all anarchisms necessarily pay due diligence to issues of sexism[7] – indeed, anarcha-feminism exists as much as a critique of 'manarchism' as of capitalist/statist patriarchy. However, the oppression of women has been a prime concern among anarchists since the 'classical' era. Figures such as Louise Michel, Voltairine de Cleyre, Emma Goldman, and Lucy Parsons, or groups like Mujeres Libres during the Spanish Revolution and Civil War, are key feminist icons of anarchist history and the 'anarchist canon.' Contemporary anarcha-feminists stress that patriarchy must not be reduced to a side issue to supposedly pre-eminent issues, such as class struggle. As the Revolutionary Anarcha-feminist Group (RAG) in Dublin put it:

> Our struggle needs to be fought alongside the struggle against other forms of oppression, not treated as an afterthought or as a distraction. We are all anarchists, united in our belief for the need to create alternatives to this capitalist, patriarchal society wherein all are dominated and exploited.
>
> From an anarchist perspective, some anarchists see feminism as a divisive issue, distracting from the 'real' issue of class struggle. Thanks to anarcha-feminism, the anarchist approach increasingly accepts that sexism does exist, and is not just a minor side issue which will fade away with the end of capitalism. When anarchists constantly stress that all experience of patriarchy is linked to class, they can gloss over another truth: the experience of class is differentiated by gender.
>
> In traditional anarchist dialogue the site for revolution has been the workplace; from a feminist perspective the family and the body are additional sites of conflict. This is our literal 'means of production' which we should be determined to seize.[8]

[7] As Deric Shannon and Jen Rogue point out in 'Refusing to wait: anarchism and intersectionality': 'Part of the reason that the Mujeres Libres saw a need for a separate women's organisation around the time of the Spanish Civil War was because "many anarchists treated the issue of women's subordination as, at best, secondary to the emancipation of workers, a problem that would be resolved 'on the morrow of the revolution'". Unfortunately, in some contexts, *this attitude isn't just a historical oddity*, though it should be.' http://libcom.org/library/refusing-wait-anarchism-intersectionality [accessed 29th July 2015]. Citing Martha A. Ackelsberg, *The Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women*, (Oakland: AK Press, 2005), p. 38) [emphasis added]. And as the Dark Star Collective note: 'It would be dishonest to assert that anarcha-feminism was welcomed with open arms by the anarchist movements ... as anarchists … we have not been as receptive to new challenges as we might hope to be.' (Dark Star Collective, 'Foreword,' *Quiet Rumours. An anarcha-feminist reader*, Dark Star Collective (eds.), (Edinburgh: AK Press and Dark Star, 2012), pp. 9-10)

[8] http://ragdublin.blogspot.co.uk/ [accessed 22nd May 2015]

So, while anarcha-feminism argues strongly against an exclusive class politics, it is at the same time quite distinct from a reductive 'single issue' feminism, clearly identifying patriarchy as being bound-up with capitalism and the state. Further, feminist anarchism informs any number of other oppressions – ableism, racism, heterosexism, speciesism etc. – through an intersectional approach. As will be explored further below, an anarchist deployment of intersectionality also informed some of the interviewees' understanding of the relationship between punk and anarchism. Shannon and Rogue describe intersectionality as 'an analysis of patriarchy [and other oppressions] that put[s] it on equal footing with capitalism as an organising system in our lives,' and forms an 'adequate response to male leaders who suggest … that we deal with women's oppression after we deal with the "primary" or "more important" class struggle.'[9] Anarchist intersectionality means that:

> all struggles against domination are necessary components for the creation of a liberatory society. It is unnecessary to create a totem pole of importance out of social struggles and suggest that some are 'primary' while others are 'secondary' or 'peripheral' because of the complete ways that they intersect and inform one another.
>
> Rather than simply reducing the experiences to the individual, they recognise the systems that oppress and exploit people and have structured their approach in such a way that calls for the 'recentering' of marginalised folks, as opposed to a method of 'inclusiveness' based on one single identity or social location.
>
> [T]he smashing of any structured hierarchy can have a destabilising effect on the rest, as the simple existence of any of these social divisions serves to naturalise the existence of all other hierarchies.[10]

This also speaks to the ways in which punk-associated anarchisms are marginalised and belittled by disciples of 'proper' class-exclusive anarchisms – as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. However, even while punk and feminism both share in being relegated to side issues (or even as unwelcome distractions), punk's relationship with feminism is not straight-forward either.

[9] Shannon and Rogue, 'Refusing to wait'
[10] Ibid.

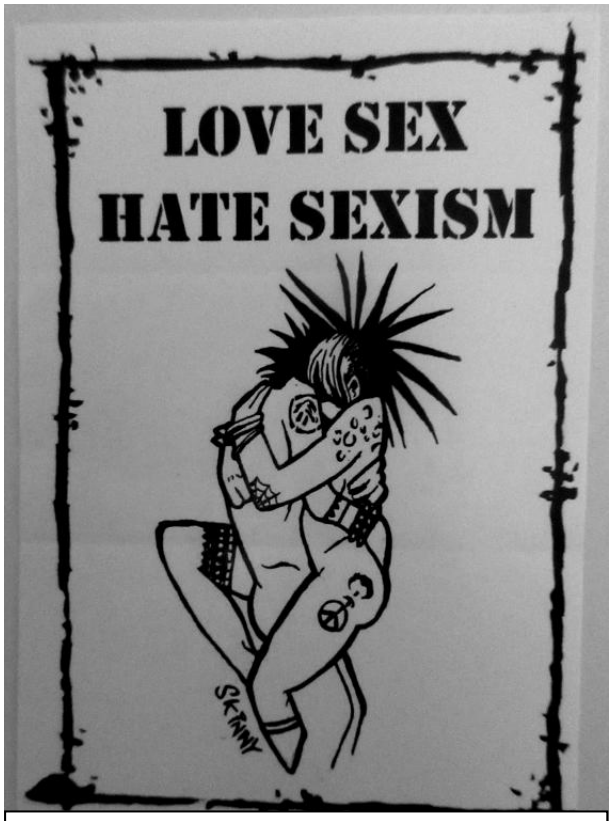

Fig. 3.3 – Anti-sexist sticker, UK.

- **Punk and feminism**

Interviewee Liz succinctly summed-up punk's historical relationship to feminism:

Punk to start off with tried so hard, and then it kind of got sidelined, and the situation got worse again; women's roles in early punk get forgotten about and written out of history.

Punk's relationship with feminism bears some similarity to the relationship between feminism anarchism in that, despite a rhetoric of equality, there are punks who are ignorant of patriarchy and under-representation of women in their scenes, or consider such concerns as peripheral to the main punk project of DIY production politics (or squatting, or anti-fascism, or animal liberation etc.). The issue of women in punk has been tackled by numerous punk scholars.[11] The general consensus (with all the expected contestations) is that punk makes important steps towards challenging sexism, but that sexism persists in myriad forms within punk. Leblanc's seminal book about women in punk considers that despite 'Punk [being] the instrument of my liberation and self-empowerment … the subculture put many of the same pressures on us as girls as did the mainstream culture we strove to oppose.'[12] She is damning of 'the male-dominated gender dynamics in the punk subculture, a subculture that portrays itself as being egalitarian, and even feminist, but is actually far from being either.'[13] Lucy O'Brien concurs, writing that 'Punk provided the perfect opportunity … to find fresh meanings as a woman … to overturn the pastel shades of post-60s femininity and make an overt statement on a newly emerging, more aggressive understanding of female sexuality,'[14] but that '[t]he punk scene …

[11] See, for example: Lauraine Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk. Girls' gender resistance in a boys' subculture*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999); Helen Reddington, *The Lost Women of Rock Music: female musicians of the punk era*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Lucy O'Brien, 'Can I Have a Taste of Your Ice Cream?' *Punk & Post-Punk*, vol. 1, no. 1, (2012), pp. 27-40, and 'The Woman Punk Made Me,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* pp. 186-198; Lucy Nicholas, 'Approaches to gender, power and authority in contemporary anarcho-punk: poststructuralist anarchism?' *eSharp*, no. 9, (spring 2007): http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_41219_en.pdf [accessed 22nd May 2012]

[12] Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk*, p. 6

[13] Ibid.

[14] O'Brien, 'The Woman Punk Made Me,' in *Punk Rock: So What?* p. 188

was not always one of halcyon acceptance. While there were men wrestling with questions of masculinity and feminism, there were just as many content to leave it unreconstructed.'[15] Helen Reddington's analysis of early punk highlights the prominence of strong female role models in many bands, but refers to women being embroiled in a 'punk battle' in which 'attempts [were made] … to prevent and discourage women from being involved, but also … to belittle and forget those who were part of it all, institutionalised misogyny is the last taboo.'[16] As Michelle Liptrot puts it: '*there is a contradiction* between the sentiments of equality (featured in some [more usually left-wing/anarchist] lyrics and zines) and in how male punks behave and react more generally to female punks, particularly females who are in a band.'[17] So punk in general has a conflicted record in terms of sexism – rhetorically feminist but practically reproducing patriarchal norms.[18]

Fig. 3.4 – Sticker featuring Poison Girls lyric, UK.

It might be expected that explicitly anarchist manifestations of punk would do better in this regard, drawing from the resistance to oppression implicit in anarchism, and from anarcha-feminist critiques in particular. Rich Cross points to anarcho-punk progenitors Poison Girls as an example of anarcha-feminism in punk. He argues that they:

> shared the sharp anarchist impulses of Crass, but refracted their anti-capitalist perspectives through a distinctive anarcha-feminist prism, which saw them give particular focus to the politics of gender, the alienation of nuclear family life and the disfiguring impact on human relationships of disempowering gender roles.[19]

Cross also discusses Crass's main feminist intervention, *Penis Envy*, which 'presented a sharply focussed and sustained anarcha-feminist critique that ranged from the personal to the systemic,

[15] Ibid. p. 194
[16] Reddington, *The Lost Women of Rock Music*, p. 194
[17] Liptrot, '"Different people with different values but the same overall goals",' p. 222, [square brackets in original], [emphasis added]
[18] Sandra Jeppesen quotes Bill Hsu discussing punk's attitude to homophobia. '[H]e notes that in the past, "Queer punks were ostracised by both the mainstream gay communities (for being punks) and the mainstream hardcore communities (for being queer)," but nonetheless, "gender-bending had often been a feature of punk in the '70s."' (Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 45, quoting Bill Hsu 'Spew: The Queer Punk Convention,' *Postmodern Culture*, vol. 2, no. 2, (1991), available at: http://pmc.iath.virginia.edu/text-only/issue.991/review-1.991 [accessed 27th November 2015]
[19] Cross, '"Take the toys from the boys",' p. 128

voiced exclusively by Crass's female vocalists.'[20] Lucy Nicholas suggests that 'DIY anarcho-punk shares with poststructuralism a productive notion of power, specifically in terms of gender,'[21] and that 'anarcho-punk literature takes a critical deconstructionist approach to gender.'[22] While the poststructuralist feminist critique is not necessarily anarcha-feminist, there is a suggestion of a high level of engagement with feminism generally, and specifically with critical feminisms. Riot Grrrl, perhaps even more than anarcho-punk, takes feminism and opposition to patriarchy as a prime concern. Sandra Jeppesen, referencing Caroline Kaltefleiter,[23] sums-up Riot Grrrl's connections to anarchism, writing that:

> riot grrls shared *anarchist* and punk politics, and developed a specific movement for *anarchafeminist* and *anarchaqueer* punks, by doing everything from organising and participating in antiracist protests, to playing in grrl bands, to making and circulating zines and records, reclaiming space for women in … a male-dominated subculture, becoming a splinter punk subculture in their own right.[24]

Indeed, Riot Grrrl professes anarcha-feminist tenets in its rhetorical output. In the Riot Grrrl manifesto, for example, point three states: 'we must take over the means of production in order to create our own meanings.' This echoes the statement of RAG, above, and point eleven is even more explicitly anti-capitalist, stating: 'we hate capitalism in all its forms and see our main goal as sharing information and staying alive, instead of making profits or being cool according to traditional standards.' The manifesto is also avowedly revolutionary, though eschews 'fantasies of Instant Macho Gun Revolution' (point five). It is also intersectionalist, attacking 'the bullshit christian capitalist way of doing things,' (point five) and identifying 'bullshit like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, anti-semitism and heterosexism' (point eleven) as operating in conjunction with one another.[25] This all suggests that anarchist-engaged punk, in the form of anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl, is far more consciously feminist, drawing on anarchism's opposition to hierarchy generally, especially incorporating anarcha-feminism's attack on patriarchy and a deployment of intersectionality.

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[20] Ibid. p. 132
[21] Nicholas, 'Approaches to gender, power and authority in contemporary anarcho-punk'
[22] Ibid.
[23] See: Caroline K. Kaltefleiter, *Revolution Girl Style Now: trebled reflexivity and the riot grrrl network*, PhD thesis, Ohio University, (2004); 'Anarchy girl style now. Riot Grrrl actions and practices,' in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies*, Randall Amster, Abraham DeLeon, Luis A. Fernandez, Anthony J. Nocella II, Deric Shannon (eds.), (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 224-235
[24] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' pp. 44-45, [emphasis added]
[25] The riot grrrl manifesto was published in 1991 in *Bikini Kill zine* no. 2, available at: http://onewarart.org/riot_grrrl_manifesto.htm [accessed 24th October 2015]

However, even in anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl, issues around gender-inequality are problematic. As Sandra Jeppesen argues: 'Punk and anarchist groups can quite easily reproduce sexism, heterosexism,[26] ableism and racism that exist in the broader society.'[27] Rich Cross writes that 'Poison Girls' articulation of anarcha-feminism could, at times, seem intended to polarise and highlight difference, rather than celebrate the value of tolerance and diversity within the anarchist conspiracy,'[28] pointing to the offence taken, particularly by Crass, at Vi Subversa's essay 'The Offending Article' which drew parallels between animal exploitation and patriarchy. Crass objected to the suggestion of violent retribution against misogynistic men, in the form of castration, but the removal of this feminist article from an anarcho-punk record sleeve[29] illustrates a clear prioritisation of pacifism above feminism. Several of the older interviewees in the UK who were active in anarcho-punk scenes in the 1980s described the prominence of feminism at that time. In many respects the interviewees were quite positive about anarcho-punk's addressing of sexism. Ryan said, '[w]e were very feminist in general … The early anarcho-punk, I mean, it was kind of dominated by white males, but I think later, because of some of the role models that were involved it did attract a lot more women to it. More so than punk in general per se.' Discussing the Warzone Collective in Belfast, he said, 'it wasn't just the Protestant/Catholic thing, but y'know more women coming into what had originally been a male punk scene. The anarcho-punk thing brought more women in.' He described women involved with the Warzone Collective in the 1980s and 1990s as being 'very very active in the central core group, y'know, both in terms of organisation … and basically doing the leg work … [N]ot just y'know running the place but, y'know, all part of the protests, more than a lot of the men in many cases.' He continued the theme of 'role models' (which might anyway be argued to be a 'liberal' feminist concern), noting that the visibility of women in the collective meant that 'when younger or other women started to see this it inspired them to then kind of get involved.' Ryan argued that this wasn't necessarily borne from an explicit anarchism, saying:

> We really tried to defeat the idea of hierarchy, just by trying to empower people, no matter where they came from, and that they didn't have to sign up to the anarchist flag,

[26] Queer punk and homocore share many parallels with Riot Grrrl, and as Jack notes, the politics of sexuality was an area where the anarcho-punk scene of the 1980s was quite weak: 'the fact that I can't remember anybody that was openly gay or lesbian, that's weird, I actually can't. I think maybe there were people that were, but weren't talking about it … The very first punk band I ever came across that talked about homophobia were MDC, right? "What Makes America So Straight And Me So Bent." And that really stands out, because it just wasn't something that was talked about very much. And then, y'know, "Homophobia," the single by Chumbawamba, that's way down the line [1994].'

[27] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 44

[28] Cross, '"Take the toys from the boys",' p. 141

[29] Subversa's essay was to appear on Conflict's 'To A Nation of Animal Lovers' single (Corpus Christi, 1983), from: Cross, '"Take the toys from the boys",' p. 141

> y'know. But if they were just interested in what was going on, how it was done, in non-hierarchical forms of organisation.

He described his own feminism as being rooted firmly in anarchism:

> Well the anarchist thing [on] the whole was to me, y'know, overcoming the ideas behind the church and the state and so on were the key factor where everything was going on everywhere else. And feminism, and I considered and do consider myself a feminist, was a part of that.

However, feminism was not among Ryan's *primary* political concerns. He said, 'it wasn't the main kind of thing, for me at the time … I kinda had a much wider perspective. Which probably sounds sexist now that I've said it, but there you go.' This suggests the subsuming of feminist issues to class struggle, as identified by RAG above. So even in Ryan's generally positive view – with lots of active women involved in the scene, providing role models for newcomers, and a general opposition to hierarchies, including patriarchy – the feminism evident in anarcho-punk is at best a qualified version or side issue, and any engagement with feminism is very loosely defined, in much the same way as described above in terms of feminism's 'place' in the wider anarchist movement. In fact, with further discussion Ryan's positive views of feminism in anarcho-punk became more and more qualified. He argued that:

> anarcho-punk kinda broke off in different directions, where some people really got the political dimension of it, and other people kind of used it … as a place to hide, in the sense that it gave them the opportunity where they didn't have to challenge their own politics, because they signed up to a fashion.

Even though people adopted the anarcho-punk aesthetic, and were exposed to the anarchist rhetoric and imagery, Ryan felt that 'the racism, and the sexism, and the homophobia, it was all still there in many regards, y'know, but it was underneath this veneer … you can wear all the gear and you can buy all the records without challenging your own politics.' Adam, also from Belfast and involved in the 1980s punk scene, concurred with the view that sexist attitudes weren't always properly addressed within anarcho-punk, especially when compared with sectarianism or racism:

> Well, they [the punks at early Warzone/Giros] were definitely anti-sexist in ethos to some extent … I wasn't aware of any overt sexism, but, you'd a loada young drunken fuckin' punks knocking about, and these people are by no means perfect … [S]ectarianism woulda been clamped down on quicker if somebody said something dodgy, if somebody said something racist, definitely woulda been outta order, and if somebody hadda done

> something that wasn't too blatantly abusive but still sexist, y'know, I wouldn't be 100% that that wouldn't have y'know, gone under the radar.

There is a clear impression of anti-racist and anti-sectarian politics taking priority over anti-sexist politics, similar to the prioritisation of pacifism over feminism by Crass in the guise of Corpus Christi Records. This impression of feminism as a minority concern in anarcho-punk was echoed by Jack, who said, 'it was mostly blokes, there were some anarcho-punk women, certainly, I knew a few of them. They probably would have identified as anarcha-feminists. But was it male dominated? Oh it definitely was, definitely was.' He continued: 'That whole gender politic thing wasn't big, and the sexual politics thing just wasn't really, y'know, I mean, *no it wasn't*. That's disturbing [laughs]. But no, it wasn't.'[30] So anarcha-feminism is suggested to be a concern for women in anarcho-punk, while men, and the scene more widely, treat such issues as peripheral or secondary to other concerns.

Ryan conceded that 'there were people who were very anti-feminist and very sexist as well, of course there always is,' and argued that this was an inevitable influence from a structurally sexist society. He said:

> I'm not making excuses for people, but some people come from communities where alternative ideas have only kind of crawled in, y'know, six months before. Some of these country areas, y'know, where people are brought up in these rigid conservative viewpoints and then they suddenly experience this.

Despite the anti-sexist rhetoric and 'good intentions,' the punk scene draws participants from wider society where sexist values are normal, and these norms are replicated in punk scenes as a result. Jeppesen makes the same point, discussing punk scenes *and anarchist groups*:

> While punk and anarchist communities are committed to anti-oppression politics, in these spaces a life-long process of unlearning society's hierarchies takes place, including attitudes that people have internalised. Sometimes the ideals that we are struggling toward therefore are less than perfectly enacted in our communities.[31]

Jeppsen's point about sexism also existing in anarchist groups is interesting, but even in anarcho-punk, where sexist attitudes are challenged as part of a general opposition to oppression and hierarchies, feminism cannot be taken for granted. It represents an improvement in social relations

[30] [emphasis added]
[31] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 44

from the wider punk scene, but anarcho-punk attitudes to gender equality are highly imperfect. Writing in 1999, Leblanc sums up the picture of feminism in punk thusly:

> [D]espite the continued development of punk, despite the subculture's oppositional, reflexive symbols, rituals, norms, values, beliefs, and ideologies, despite the critique of a break-away faction (Riot Grrrl), at the beginning of its third decade of resistance, revolt, and refusal, punk remains a predominantly white, masculine youth subculture. Punk is still a site where girls remain marginalised and silenced. These girls' lives, experiences, and opinions have remained unarticulated within the subculture, and invisible to the public. Even within punk, the most rhetorically egalitarian and oppositional of youth subcultures, girls are still on the outside.[32]

This complicated historical relationship between punk and feminism persists in the contemporary context.

Fig. 3.5 – Detail from *Bastards In Blue* compilation by Now Or Never! (c. 2012).

- **Contemporary punk and feminism in the UK**

The interviews with women (and men) currently actively involved with feminist interventions in the UK punk scene revealed a similar picture to that described above of the 1980s and 1990s. Despite the rhetoric of equality and feminism, the contributions of high-profile women in early punk, and the anarcha-feminist concerns of anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl, punk remains dogged by issues of gender inequality and outright sexism – there remain numerous examples of overt sexism in UK punk, with bands producing chauvinistic lyrics and imagery, usually in some effort to shock the 'PC brigade,' or as laddish humour. This stems from the same 'shock tactic' impulse as the sporting of Nazi swastikas in the late-1970s – but it is notable that in the contemporary context, opposition to racism is generally more strongly enforced as an 'alternative moral code' than is opposition to sexism.

Isabelle, Megan, and Liz all first encountered punk in the 2000s as teenagers, and all three described an early impression of punk as male dominated. Isabelle said that 'trying to find women in punk is really difficult.'[33] Megan recalled that 'most of the bands that we saw were all guys, and … I didn't really question that for quite a while.' Liz echoed this, saying her first experience of punk 'was

[32] Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk*, p. 64
[33] Interview conducted 05/10/2013

mostly the male-dominated stuff. So I listened to a lot of Dead Kennedys, Bad Religion, Green Day, Captain Everything, yeh all kinds of stuff. But yeh everything else was male-dominated, and I just … kind of accepted that that was the way music was.' This gender inequality also extended from music consumption to everyday sexism in her social life in the punk scene, as she recalled: 'I just kind-of accepted [that] that's the way, when you go to the pub with a big group of mostly guys, then that's how conversations will be.' Each of these three interviewees also reported incidents of sexism in the punk scene (**some of which may be triggering to people who have experienced sexual violence**). Isabelle noted the persistence of gender stereotyping in punk, with women being expected to perform domestic tasks, and not to have musical proficiency. She said:

> I remember … this gig I was at in Dublin and there was this woman … playing the bass …. I remember someone going up to her and being like 'you play really good bass for a girl,' and I was like 'she plays really good bass in general, what the fuck does her gender matter?' And it was at that point I was like, 'it's always gonna be like this, if these people I think are kind of radical … are like this, what hope is there for like the normal people to ever like get past this kind of gender binary, gender segregation of where women are shit at music, women are good at cooking, women should be in the kitchen' … [I]t's even fundraisers that I've done for punk gigs and all these baked things and I'm like 'yes I like baking, but I do know at the same time you're only asking me because I'm a woman, not because you think what I bake is great.' It's like 'oh we know you're a woman and you're not in any of these bands so therefore you'll bake for this' … And in some ways it's kind of insulting .

Megan also discussed the reinforcement of mainstream gender roles in punk. She described one incident that displayed this quite starkly:

> Bands, for some reason, won't let me touch their stuff … Yeh, that's pretty sexist, like that's one of the most kind of like obvious things … [I]f I go to like a van they'll kind of like [be] handing all the big amps to the guys, and then they'll turn around to me 'and here's a snare drum for you,' and I'm like [makes face] … [A]nd there was one time I [was] just like 'I can frigging carry things, just let me,' so they gave me the heaviest thing in the van, and it was at a venue where you had to go up the stairs to get into the venue. So they watched me carry this fucking keyboard up the stairs while they stood at the bottom taking bets on how long it would be before I fell or asked one of them to help me … I mean a lot of it's more like the more sort of benevolent sexism. They kind of like y'know, they don't think, 'oh let's give the little lady a snare drum,' they think 'well we don't want

to weigh her down,' y'know. That incident with the keyboard is the only kind of outright thing.

TRIGGER WARNING

The incidents Isabelle and Megan describe indicate a persistent, insidious, but relatively 'low-level' sexism in punk scenes. However, this kind of sexist undercurrent inevitably manifests itself in much more explicit incidents as well. Liz plays in a Riot Grrrl band which is a mixed gender band with a singer/bassist who is transgender (the interviewee Grace here). Liz recalled a very explicitly sexist incident while playing a gig:

> [W]e performed at [Coventry Student Union's] Love Music Hate Homophobia event [and] we were the target of some pretty grim sexism/transphobia. [Grace] read her 'Message To Those Who Would Attend RadFem' out as a spoken word piece.[34] A group of guys at the back of the room, the 'punk' band who played before us, started shouting out and laughing, making transphobic comments about [Grace] and surgery, and 'how does sex feel?' [Grace] replied dismissively to them and carried on going. When she got to the bit about suicidal friends and rape, they started shouting out 'woo rape! I prefer gang rape!' That's when the performance got completely forgotten and [Grace] called them out for their sexism, shouting at them about what shits they were.[35] Security showed up to bundle them out of the room, and came up to me during our next song to say we had to stop playing. I figured we were running out of time and said we'd finish this song and then do the last. She was insistent so we finished with the song we were on. Afterwards we realised we'd only been on stage for twenty out of our 45 minutes. They just wanted us off stage. They might well have chucked the offending band out of the venue, but apparently it's not OK to call out sexism [or] respond in any way other than meekly carry on with playing our songs. We were banned from Coventry Students' Union. That's pretty much the worst we've … had whilst nominally in a punk scene. There's far far worse that other people have experienced, but I've been lucky enough to not have anything bad happen.

In these incidents, sexism and even outright misogyny and transphobia, are reported as occurring *in punk scenes*. Megan and Liz both described these occasions as the most explicitly sexist incidents they had experienced, but Isabelle lamented that 'it's always gonna be like this' and Liz said other

[34] http://transactivist.wordpress.com/2012/05/21/message/ [accessed 22nd May 2015]
[35] http://notrightpunk.com/2013/02/22/statement-on-sexism-at-coventry-sus-lgbt-history-month-gig/ [accessed 22nd May 2015]

people have experienced 'far far worse.' These incidents all occurred in the last few years, and paint a very negative picture of attitudes to gender equality in contemporary punk scenes in the UK, suggesting that sexism remains prevalent.

Of course, not all men in punk scenes are as misogynistic as those described above. Oisín discussed the involvement of women in the London punk scene:

> They're definitely in the minority when it comes to the bands, but … there are some. Like [Mia]'s one, probably the best bass player in London, she's an incredible bass player. And you've got [Lisa] … she does alotta putting gigs on as well … [Stephi] plays in loadsa bands. It's really, it's kind of weird to see … [a] girl drummer, especially [a] girl drummer who's really good. [Stephi]'s really good … But, yeh … girls in punk bands definitely are in the minority … There's alotta girls that put gigs on and do other things, but just actually playing in bands … they are in a minority.

So while some women are prominent in bands and other active roles, they are notable by their limited number. Of the whole London punk scene, which is sizable, Oisín can only muster the names of three off the top of his head. His point about it being unusual to see a proficient woman drummer rings as sexist – which perhaps points to the pervasiveness of misogyny in the punk scene – but the observation at least suggests consciousness of the underrepresentation of women. Liam, of the Warzone Collective in Belfast, was conscious of the problem of gender equality too. He said that while there are 'a lot of important women in the scene, and a lot of people who do like shit loads,' much of the work 'seems to be like un-thanked in the background.' He echoed Isabelle in pointing to the:

> horrible example [of] cooking for bands, but like not even getting thanked for doing it. Y'know, not because the band don't know, just because the people [are] happy to work but they don't want the gratitude for doing it … I dunno why it exists like, fuck knows.

Oisín in London also recognised that even while women make up around 40% of those attending punk gigs, their representation in active roles is much lower, especially in bands. His analysis was that 'it's always been kinda like that, y'know. 'Cause your average girl doesn't sit down with a Black Sabbath album when she's eleven and decide she wants to be a drummer, y'know.' While Oisín's point is suggestive of the influence of structural sexism in wider society, and while both he and Liam are clearly conscious of the issue of gender inequality, their analyses as to why this might be the case are limited. Isabelle, Megan and Liz moved beyond 'fuck knows' and 'it's always been like that' to offer their analyses of why sexism persists in punk, despite the rhetoric of equality and anti-

sexism. Megan described the lack of women in active roles in punk scenes as a self-reinforcing problem, saying it's 'a bit chicken and egg really … people say "well it's clear that women just don't want to do it."' Megan puts on feminist punk gigs in Brighton, but noted that finding feminist bands or bands with women can be difficult, which means other gig promoters generally don't bother. She said:

> it's harder to find all-girl bands, so most don't put the effort in … [I]t's a happy coincidence if they get one, but then they're not gonna go and seek out another one. Like y'know, when I put on gigs … all-female gigs, I'll have one band from Devon, one band from London, one band from Brighton, and maybe one from Yorkshire. Y'know, it's a lot more difficult, and costs more … and then that feeds into people going 'well obviously the girls just don't want to do it.'

Even if gig promoters would prefer better gender equality among bands, the potential extra effort of finding them, or the extra cost of covering a longer travel distance, outweighs any concerns over equality or representation. As was the case with Keep The Faith festival described above, Megan says that as a result she can 'still go to festivals where there's one girl band, all weekend, and that's pretty shit.' In fact, Keep The Faith festival had only one female band member over the course of the weekend, not even the meagre 'one girl band' that Megan complained about. In addition to the 'inconvenience' of addressing gender inequality in punk, and the lack of women punk 'role models' as a result, Liz highlighted 'entrenched societal/structural sexism where the very idea of women, especially those who "don't look punk," playing anything like what we do is still somewhat shocking/surprising to people.' This structural sexism doesn't just make itself felt through sexist attitudes and behaviour from men in punk, but also affects how women perceive their own role. As Liz said, 'it's that same structural sexism that doesn't let as many women think it's an option to get involved, doesn't give them so many opportunities where they can get on stage and be judged for the music and not their looks etc., which perpetuates the problem.' With similarity to the discussion of sexism in anarcho-punk above, Megan pointed to the inevitable influence of sexism in wider society on punk scenes:

> I mean a lot of it is like these societal conditions that guys don't care … from birth [they] are kind of brought-up being like, 'well y'know, boys are meant to be in punk bands, and play loud guitar music,' and girls have to overcome that, like standing up and going 'no actually, I think our band *is* good enough to play' … this kind of societal conditioning is quite difficult to overcome. Y'know when you're being told you're kind of like quiet and emotional and nurturing, and make everybody dinner while they play music.

As well as feminism being a contentious issue within punk, the mainstream feminist movement also treats punk with suspicion. Isabelle is active in campaigning for abortion rights in Ireland, particularly in the Republic, but also the extension of UK abortion rights to the North. She pointed to the implications that being a punk had for her in her campaigning as part of the more 'mainstream' feminist movement:

> [M]ainstream pro-choice campaigns, they don't really like people that look different … I find it really conflicting when like alternative people try and support us … [I]t's very hard to try and be on that middle line where I can see both people's point of view, where the punks want to support it, but the like kind of liberals in the campaign don't want the punks involved because y'know, they look a bit weird.

However, Isabelle was clear that dismissing punks from feminist campaigns was unproductive:

> [W]e need to appeal to all people, because it's not just nice people that have abortions, it's alternative people that also have abortions, and people that don't look like you that have abortions. Y'know, you just can't exclude all these people just because you don't think the way they look is right for the media.

She said, 'I think a lot of my abortion activism is very hard, because I'm seen as very radical compared to a lot of other people. And there are times when you kind of feel like, "I need to give up on this," y'know, I feel like one person within it.' The unease with punk that Isabelle identifies in the mainstream feminist movement has strong parallels with the anti-punk strain evident in some forms of anarchism, especially those focussed on class struggle, as will be discussed in Chapter 6.

- **Feminist activism and interventions in punk in the UK**

Against this backdrop of unfulfilled anti-sexist rhetoric, feminist interventions are a particularly important feature of contemporary UK punk. These take the form of feminist women-centric or mixed gender bands, feminist punk gigs and festivals which feature bands with female members, zines, resource websites, and feminist punk networks (see also Appendix 7).

As mentioned above, Liz plays with a Riot Grrrl band. She describes feminist punk as a scene in its own right, noting that the band:

> generally get asked to play nights with strong feminist/queer leanings and as such most of my interactions with a 'scene' these days is that kind of scene, in which the politics, the

> feminism is all very 'right-on' and as such I don't really often encounter that kind of [sexist] wankery.

Liz discussed the feminist punk scene with Grace, who plays in the same band, in a joint interview. Liz said, '[t]here's something happening in the UK at the moment, there's more and more bands starting-up that have a focus on feminist politics and women's visibility at gigs, and stuff like that … There's lots of feminist punk happening at the moment.' Grace agreed and added that 'a large number [of these bands] call themselves Riot Grrrl.' Liz mentioned explicitly feminist events '[l]ike LadyFest Sheffield that we played recently, there's lots of sort of new LadyFests springing up all over the place.' Grace felt that sexism was being actively tackled in this scene, saying:

> [p]eople are trying to address it. Not particularly doing the best job, but really trying … I feel like it's the most inclusive punk movement around at the moment. But I would say that. But I mean there is a focus on women's participation obviously, but I mean there's loads of Riot Grrrl-ish bands around at the moment like with male members.

Fig. 3.6 – Image from t-shirt from Equal Fest #3, held at Wharf Chambers, Leeds and 1in12 Club Bradford, March 2013. Image is pastiche of a Discharge logo.

She agreed with Liz that 'yeh, I think something's really been happening. Lucy Nicholas notes the significance of the 'womyn only' workshop at BellaDonna DIY Fest in 2003, which publicised itself as being necessary because '[u]nfortunately the Hardcore/Punk/DIY music scene is dominated by males. As a means of addressing this issue this workshop is designed to create a space by womyn for womyn.'[36] The basic point of these events is to raise the issue of gender equality in punk, to highlight women as active participants in punk in an effort to provide role models for other women to get involved, and to break down the structural sexism which works to limit women's involvement in punk. As point eleven of the Riot Grrrl manifesto states 'doing/reading/seeing/hearing cool things that validate and challenge us can help us gain the

[36] *Belladonna DIY Zine* 2003 quoted in Nicholas, 'Approaches to gender, power and authority in contemporary anarcho-punk'

strength and sense of community that we need.'[37] So the (typically liberal) concern with representation, which has cropped-up on several occasions here already, is a recognised core concern for Riot Grrrl. Megan recalled the excitement of encountering women in punk with whom she could identify in her teens: 'When I did find like bands that were sort of like female-fronted … [I] pounced on them and listened them to death. Like, still a little bit in love with Brody from the Distillers.' Isabelle echoed this, recalling the influence of X-Ray Spex:

> [F]rom there I was like, 'oh, women can be punk too.' Like it was at that kinda stage I realised that to be punk I no longer had to dress like a man, I could wear skirts … and from there going on to like Bikini Kill and … the Slits and things like this. And I was like 'oh wow, women actually have a place in punk.' And from that I felt a lot less alone, and from seeing them and they were quite feminine, and I was like 'oh it is OK to be feminine and wear skirts and not have to like fit in.'

This chimes with Leblanc's point about women 'negotiating between the norms of femininity and the masculinity of punk … construct[ing] forms of resistance to gender norms in ways that permit them to retain a strong sense of self.'[38] Leblanc notes the difficulty women face in overcoming the perception of the punk scene as masculine, when she writes that:

> gender is problematic for punk girls in a way that it is not for punk guys, because punk girls must accommodate female gender within subcultural identities that are deliberately coded as male. How do they negotiate between these seemingly conflicting sets of norms?[39]

Identification with women in punk is significant, as Megan argues: 'if there were … more girls in bands … then more girls would join bands, and they would get put on more, and then if they were put on more, people would see it more … It's very circular.' Liz agreed that this was key to combating gender inequality in punk:

> There's still so many unchecked privileges, unthinking comments, and general societal views on what is more acceptable for women. That can make involvement still a little more scary for women. And until there are more and more women involved, and as role models, then this will continue.

[37] Riot Grrrl manifesto, available at: http://onewarart.org/riot_grrrl_manifesto.htm [accessed 24th October 2015]
[38] Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk*, p. 13
[39] Ibid. p. 8

Liam also emphasised the importance of encouraging the participation of women in the scene in Belfast. He said:

> [t]he one thing I think could really be worked on is bringing women into the scene more here. That's just something that we never fully got back [from the earlier incarnation of Warzone] … I think more efforts could be made to bring them back. I guess *that's the main issue* for me, now.[40]

Liam's identification of women's involvement as a prime concern is poignant, especially compared with Ryan's recollections of the Warzone Collective in the 1980s and 1990s, where, for many, feminism took a back seat to other concerns. But rather than criticise the anarchist punk scenes of previous generations, Liam pointed to the positive example of women's involvement in punk that can be drawn from the 'traditional Irish krust sound' which often had women 'very incorporated within it.' He mentioned bands such as 'Toxic Waste, Bleeding Rectum, Jobby Krust, like the male/female split vocal, that always worked, Health Hazard doing it … Pink Turds In Space … So like we've always had that very strong like identifying sound.' Liam also noted, that in addition to the interventions taken by women, men also had a role in challenging sexism in the punk scene (and anarchist movement): 'I think it's something that we should always be aware of, especially from our manarchist roles, and try and counter that whatever ways we can.' Grace also commented on men's involvement in feminist punk:

> It's really interesting how gender's being used … obviously everyone's like 'yeh, we've gotta be racially inclusive and trans inclusive and disabled inclusive,' but like there's this unspoken thing of gender inclusivity that kind of extends to men as well … Like the LadyFest Sheffield CD which had a bunch of male-fronted feminist bands like Onsind and Amorous Dialogues on it.

Isabelle, who is involved in pro-choice campaigning, also highlighted punk's role in inspiring her to continue with feminist activism. She said:

> there are different things that kinda spur you on, like there was at one point where Kathleen Hanna [of Bikini Kill and Le Tigre] sent a message being like, y'know, 'things you do in Ireland, I support you, y'know, anything you need me to do, I will do it.' And I was like, 'wow, this is Kathleen Hanna!' Like I've loved her since I was 16.

[40] [emphasis added]

However, efforts to increase the inclusion of women in punk events are not unproblematic. Liz discussed '"normal/straight" punk shows – at which we're then often the only band with women … *[T]oken bookings* – at least they show signs that the promoters are trying to change things, albeit slowly.'[41] She was sceptical of the motivations of one promoter in particular:

> a guy … [who] actively promotes and runs gigs for female-only bands, which is great to see. But the way in which he does it, and the massive focus on the look [and] image of the girls in the bands he promotes, I find a little suspect … Excluding men entirely from the stage, but inviting them to come and gawk at these women sits rather uneasily with me.

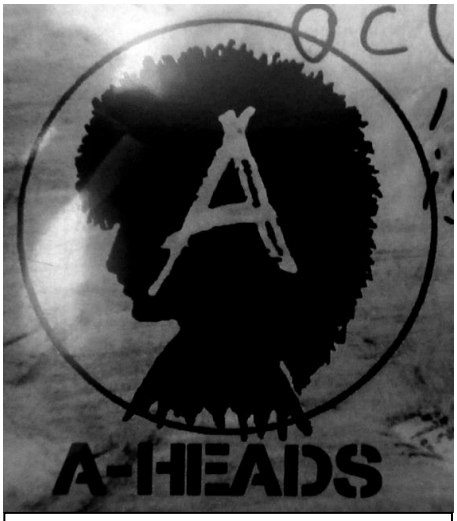

Fig. 3.7 – Detail from A-Heads, *Damaged Goods*, (DIY, 2012).

So encouraging women to participate in punk is not a panacea for sexism, in that it may be dismissed as mere tokenism, or can even take the form of ogling and objectification. Katie, who fronts a band, recognised the potential for objectification and ogling, and described her spectacular tactic for challenging this behaviour:

> I've made … a cock necklace, and cock skirt … [B]ecause quite often on stage I do wear … not very many clothes, or, fairly revealing. So I thought if I wear this, if you wanna look at my tits you've gotta look at a cock … [laughs]. But I just think it was quite subversive on it, 'cause you know, when you are the performer, especially a female performer and there's not very many male performers, then the idea is the ogling, which is fine, 'cause I don't mind people ogling my outfit and me in a way, because I'm being a piece of art in performing. But I just thought it was very funny to do that, and then people would have to look at cock instead, when they weren't expecting to, necessarily … [T]hat freaks people out actually [laughs].

So, contemporary punk in the UK continues to be afflicted by sexism, but there is a significant trend towards meaningful engagements with feminism, which build-on and critique the interventions of anarcho-punk in the 1980s and Riot Grrrl in the 1990s. The anarcha-feminism of anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl actually indicates a very strong anarchist impetus generally, and the overlap in participants between punk and activist groups described in the previous chapter also applies here. As Isabelle

[41] [emphasis added]

points out: 'there were a lot of kind of punks in RAG, and there still kind of are.'[42] So punk is not only influenced by anarcha-feminism, but anarcha-feminist groups also draw some of their membership from the punk scene.

If opposition to patriarchy is considered as an essential part of anarchism (as it well should be), then the frequently experienced ignorance of gender equality and misogynistic attitudes in punk seriously undermine the relationship between punk and anarchism. However, this is to place upon punk an expectation of achieving perfectly idealised social relations free from sexism – which is an expectation unrealised in any other setting. Of course, *feminist* punk is only necessary because of *sexist* punk, but this criticism can also be extended to the anarchist movement (or any other part of society for that matter). The crucial point is that punk is an active site of resistance to the sexism of wider society, even while it cannot completely escape that sexism – it is a 'work in progress,' but consciously so.

Despite the negative experiences described above, many of the interviewees described punk as a positive influence, and positive culture for women and feminism generally. Liz, while remaining conscious of the deep imperfections of punk as a vehicle for feminist ideas, surmised that:

> [i]n general, I think there's a [lot] of good intentions within the punk scene on [the] whole. Feminism [and] sexism have been issues that have been discussed throughout punk's history and most people who are involved in any way have an awareness of this, and a good number do work to address the issues … As I say, I point the finger for the sexism more at society than at punk, most punks have their hearts in the right place, and the few bad apples shouldn't tarnish the name of punk as a whole.

So contemporary UK punk scenes basically reflect the long-standing scholarly and participant interpretation of punk as purporting to be anti-sexist rhetorically, but failing to live up to that posture in all cases. But importantly, the UK punk scene is witnessing a strong resurgence in active engagements with feminism, particularly anarchist-inspired feminism, and these interventions are building on the foundations laid by anarcho-punk and Riot Grrrl.

[42] RAG has, since the research, disbanded.

Punk, feminism, anarcha-feminism, and sexism in Poland

The interviewees in Poland presented a picture quite similar to the UK in terms of gender equality in punk – i.e. there were some proactively feminist interventions, especially in connection with anarcha-feminism, but these were necessary because of the persistence of sexism in the scene.

- **Sexism in punk in Poland**[43]

Kinga was the singer with a prominent punk band in Poland in the 1990s. She reported sexism as an issue at that time:

> Back then? Yes, it happened sometimes, it happened. Yeh, like shouting when I was on stage, I could hear shouts like 'show us your tits,' and fuck! And some strange questions sometimes from people, from the zines interviewing us. Questions to me, like 'how is it like being a woman on tour?' And … I didn't know what to say, like, 'the same as you, I dunno! I need some tampons sometimes and that's all' [laughs].

Fig. 3.8 – Homomilitia, *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór* [*Your body, your choice*], (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996).

Interviewees discussing the contemporary punk scene in Poland noted the persistence of sexism. Marta considered 'that Poland actually is quite backward' in terms of gender equality, compared with other European scenes. She echoed the themes of ignorance of gender issues and tokenism discussed in the UK:

[43] Homophobia is another important issue in the Polish punk scene, especially since homophobia is quite prevalent in wider Polish society, especially with the influence of the Catholic Church and the resurgence of a macho-nationalism in recent years. This, inevitably, affects the punk scene as well. As Adrian notes: 'especially in Poland, I have to admit that homophobia is quite uh, well if I say it's common it's too much, but it's too common, too popular in my opinion, from the scene and from the movement, and those things happen, right?' Kasia noted that, while anti-sexist initiatives at Rozbrat had been quite successful, anti-homophobic initiatives were much less-so. She said, 'we even wanted to be more open with LGBT stuff, but I dunno why it doesn't work really good here, maybe because … there aren't many gays and lesbians in the collective, or I dunno.' However, Adrian did point out that most squats in Poland have anti-homophobia as a prominent feature of their 'rules' of acceptable behaviour.

> Even among people from let's say [the] movement, there is a lot of people that are not … conscious about … gender issues or sexism. Or, even if they speak about it, if they want to be seen as people that are sensitive in that matter, then you can see that it's just fake y'know. Because, I mean, I think it leads to the same problem of repeating some slogans without understanding, and then in everyday life you can see that actually this is bullshit.

She also described a sexist division of labour, with men doing technical and organisational work, and women doing domestic work, and identified this as a reproduction of gender norms in wider society. She said:

Fig. 3.9 – Detail from Infekcja, *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011).

> people that are organising the shows … mostly boys, yeh? Then people that are taking care of the equipment, even though there are girls that also know how to do that, it's mostly boys. And then girls are selling beer at the bar, cooking for bands, cleaning after show, and y'know, for me it's just repeating the same stereotypes and social roles that we have in the society that we try to criticise … For me it doesn't make sense.

This is very similar to the situation described by interviewees in the UK. Krzysztof spoke about how societal sexism extends into the squat scene as well. In the case of Wagenburg in Wrocław, Krzysztof said:

> it's changing … it's less women, and especially [in the] last months … Polish society is not so equal, yeh? It's still … the same [perception] that woman is weaker, no? And man is strong … and life is hard on Wagenburg, no? You have to do lots of things … you have to physically work around yourself … to survive. So, maybe it's not easy for women.

Krzysztof pointed out that attacks by neo-Nazis on squats in recent years had also impacted on the participation of women: 'the place was attacked by … nationalists … [I]t's maybe not a safe place anymore, so, yeh some girls move[d] out.' It's not totally clear whether Krzysztof was justifying the gender imbalance at Wagenburg on the basis of stereotypes, or if he was suggesting that it is hard for women to challenge gender stereotypes because of structural sexism – although it could feasibly be the former – either way, the implication is that there are fewer women in the scene as a result of fascist attacks.

Rafa discussed the problem of challenging the sexism which reproduces itself in wider society: 'it might be difficult for us, for conscious people … when we talk about people that are not conscious, because they are in this patriarchal … system more and very deep. Then this is extremely difficult, just to, y'know to break these stereotypes.' This analysis of the reason for the persistence of sexism in the punk scene is very similar to the analyses of several interviewees in the UK. Adrian, discussing the squat scene in particular, said, '[p]atriarchal and homophobic behaviours are still quite common and happening and they are most painful ones right? Because *squats are supposed to be safe spaces* … you should feel safe and comfortable here, right?'[44] He continued:

> if someone comes and doesn't pay for a beer at the bar, or gets into a show without paying, OK, honestly no one really gives a fuck about that. And if someone comes and grabs girls' asses, now this a problem. She's being victimised this way, she's being abused, and that's, well that's much more painful than someone not paying for a beer or I dunno, throwing-up on the table.

Rafa made a similar point about sexist behaviour in squats as being especially problematic, because it is *unexpected*:

> It happens, y'know, sexist behaviour or actions or shit like that, and this is really a shock. Because … if someone is in this anarchist movement, in the punk rock movement … you expect that someone can … respect women, respect animals, respect environment and so on … But it happens, of course it happens. *Especially sexist stuff*, it's really shit.[45]

So, as in the UK, interviewees reported sexism in the punk scene, but noted that sexism was a problem – people were conscious of it running contrary to the values espoused by the scene. Krzysztof's comments suggest that sexism remains internalised among some scene participants, but a clear emphasis on combating sexism, and subtle analyses of its manifestations were expressed by several interviewees.

- **Feminist activism and interventions in punk in Poland**

Adrian pointed out that squats often have guidelines detailing acceptable behaviour inside those spaces, and that anti-sexist 'rules' are usually very prominent within those. He said, 'the reason why those rules refer to these kind of things [is] because … it's easiest to think about because they are

[44] [emphasis added]
[45] [emphasis added]

most painful, most generating strongest emotions and therefore when you think about the rules that's the first thing you come up with.' These guidelines (or rules) operate on a similar basis as a safer spaces policy.[46] The effort to challenge sexism in the scene, at least rhetorically, echoes Liz's comments about the feminist/queer punk scene in the UK where sexist behaviour is less commonly experienced, and is dealt with much more robustly if it does occur.

With further similarity to the UK, the importance of encouraging women's involvement in the scene was described as being paramount by interviewees in Poland. Mateusz at the Odzysk squat in Poznań discussed their success in attracting more women to get involved:

> At the beginning … there were only few girls, but … we had some talks with each[other], [about] why it is like that, why … one fourth of us only is girls … [W]e wanted to change … this place to be more let's say comfortable, more convenient for girls. Yeh we were trying to invite everybody … especially, girls … [now] the men are not the majority … And now I think, I dunno, maybe half of people from here are girls, perhaps.

This is understood as more than mere tokenism or headcounting, and demonstrates the importance of getting women involved in the scene in active roles, who can act as role models to encourage more women to become involved.

Despite reports of sexism in Polish punk scenes, and the necessity of feminist interventions to challenge that, most interviewees in Poland were generally positive about punk's engagements with feminism (see also Appendix 7, part B). Adrian perceived a general improvement in this respect over the last decade or so, though still viewed punk scenes in Poland as lagging behind some neighbouring European scenes:

> Well, it's changing for better. I remember times when it was really a … sexist scene …. If you have experience from place like Sweden … or Germany, or wherever, it looks really bad here if you look at it close. But the on the other hand compared to what you could experience ten years ago, it is absolutely different and way, way, way better.

Rafa suggested that, among men at least, feminism was common, but implicit: 'In general, I mean most guys, they're feminist, but they don't call themselves feminists.' Kasia at Rozbrat squat was

[46] Safer spaces establish 'guidelines for conditions that are not acceptable in a space, and action plan(s) for what one will do if those conditions arise, [as] part of being proactive in creating a safer space. Issues like hurtful language and behaviour (both within the space itself, and in patterns extending beyond activities of the space), violence, touching people without their consent, intolerance of someone's religious beliefs or lack thereof, and just straight-up being creepy, sleazy, racist, ageist, sexist, heterosexist, transphobic, ablebodiest, classist, sizist, or exhibiting any other behaviour or language that may perpetuate oppression, may be addressed with a safer space policy.' http://saferspacesnyc.wordpress.com/ [accessed 17th April 2014]

very positive about gender equality there. She said, 'I think it's really safe … I feel really … safe.' Contrary to the descriptions of gendered labour roles described by interviewees in the UK and by Marta in Poland, Kasia said that:

> [E]verybody is involved, like I don't like this idea girls are just sitting and cooking in the kitchen, no, I guess we all feel equal … [A]nd if we do even some like physical work or even like demonstration and black bloc … nobody look[s] at you like 'no you're not gonna do this because you're a small girl' it's like 'yeh, yeh, you should do it because everybody is involved' … [I]t's sometimes even like [laughs] for example, if we are doin' like roofs and construction stuff.

The suggestion of physical work, black bloc demonstrations and construction work as *extreme* cases, '*even* if we are doing roofs,' undermines the suggestion of gender equality that Kasia makes. Kasia also mentioned that this emphasis on gender inclusivity meant a resistance to women-only spaces and feminist events:

> I remember one thing, there was some lesbian group that wanted to make a evening here just for girls … in our club. [A]nd I remember that [the] boys didn't like the idea they cannot be a part of it, and we told them that like, 'y'know for us it's also some kind of … sexism if you [don't] allow guys to come to the party, because we all feel equal here.' [A]nd they couldn't actually understand that, and they were really like 'no, no, this is just for girls,' and we don't like the ideas like that. We don't do this here, we want to share like everything together, yeh.

While the argument that it is sexist to exclude men on the basis of gender is crudely valid, this logic assumes an already equal society, where men are not in positions of privilege over women, and it ignores the potentially empowering aspect of women-only spaces. To disallow women-only spaces is to make a bold claim for already-achieved gender equality, which, despite Kasia's claims, is almost certainly not achieved, and therefore further entrenches sexist social relations. In fact, from a brief few days observing the day-to-day goings on at Rozbrat, Kasia's enthusiasm for gender equality there was somewhat overstated, with men being engaged in technical tasks such as car and bicycle repair, and martial arts training (though this was not exclusively men). Paulina, who also lives at Rozbrat, recognised the issue of gender inequality there, and especially pointed to gendered labour roles – contrary to Kasia's assertions:

> Yeh yeh, oh definitely. On this we have a problem, y'know, but also, and also we try to reflect on that … but y'know … we were all brought up in the capitalist society and I mean

> [laughs] we have all this 'father didn't teach me something' … Yeh yeh there is a gender division of work in here as well, but that also is changing [laughs]. Yeh yeh … I guess, more of a technical job would be done by guys here, but also we have macho boys who really use this position y'know. So I think it's both sides, I mean both sides should do more to fight this division.

So, the recurring theme of structural sexism in wider society impacting on punk scenes appears again, and even while Paulina suggests that the situation is improving, gendered labour roles persist.

- **Anarchism and feminism in Poland**

Fig. 3.10 – Back cover of Homomilitia, *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór* [*Your body, your choice*], (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996).

The overlap between participants in punk scenes and the feminist movement was highlighted by interviewees in Poland, as it was in the UK. Adrian went as far as to suggest that 'the feminist movement in Poland actually started from our milieu. Many of people involved now in the mainstream feminist movement started in the anarcha-feminist scene, producing zines or trying to raise awareness in the scene. And it did work.' Paulina was positive about women's impact on the anarchist scene in Poznań and across Poland. She said, 'in the discussions in the movement … because we kind-of as Rozbrat, or as Poznań, our milieu kind of play a role in the anarchist movement in Poland, so actually we feel that we influence the discussion.' Natalia is a member of Anarchist Federation in Poznań, and suggested a fairly positive relationship between anarchism and feminism. She said, 'you cannot be anarchist without … feminis[m] … We are anarcho-syndicalist … so we fight for women's rights and [against] the difference with money they earn, and … we see that, we know it's very important, and we work with that. It's something, of course.' However, as in the UK, the imperfect relationship between feminism and punk scenes is reflected in the relationship between feminism and the anarchist movement.

As Paulina, who is a member of the anarcho-syndicalist *Ogólnopolski Związek Zawodowy Inicjatywa Pracownicza* (OZZIP – National Union of Workers Initiative), said, '[w]ell we have a few comrades

who admit, would openly say that feminism is a neo-liberal tradition, and, well comrades that I know … we don't agree on this issue.' She also pointed to the phenomenon of 'pro-life anarchist[s]' in Poland, which is now 'very few people' but used to be much more prominent. She said, 'that has changed a lot also in this scene … we would never accept … speaking about this in public, and we have a pro-choice website and we promote [that] on the Rozbrat website, as well.' Paulina suggested that a lot of the tensions between anarchism and feminism stem from the fact that 'the Polish feminist movement in the '90s came … from like [the] university tradition of gender studies and lit., and cultural studies, and of course got cash from the West … all this NGO crap.' She said that because of a lack of a:


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Fig. 3.11 – OZZIP leaflet, March 2012.

> real tradition of the more grassroot[s] or radical feminis[m] we had to somehow fight for it as women in the movement. And we did that, we started a women's group … here, [at] that time there was maybe two women in the Anarchist Federation and … thirty guys. So we decided to have our own meetings, actually to kind-of, this fancy word, to empower us, to be part of that expression.

She viewed this as successful, especially when a 'few strong women activists joined the union and the Anarchist Federation and really changed the perspective. Today it's really cool, and also in the house, it's the same more-or-less number of women living in the house [as men].' So, again, women's participation is a key concern, and she pointed to the prominence of women in tenants' campaigns and in union organisation in kindergartens, where OZZIP has '150 members in this section.' Paulina recognised the economic and social shifts in neo-liberal capitalism that influence women's position in labour struggles:

> I think it's also changing … with the precariousness of the working site … what we do as a union … with the precarious workers, which is more feminised and, yeh, we are not strong in the classic worksites because … the business union[s] are there … [A]lso I see a lot of

> women activists in the workers' movement in recent years as well, it really has changed, if I compare … ten years ago, and now.

While the anarchist movement remains an imperfect vehicle for feminist ideals, it is, like the punk scene, making strides to properly address feminist critiques and analyses, as well as influence the wider women's movement.

Punk, feminism, anarcha-feminism, and sexism in Indonesia

The relationship between feminism and punk in Indonesia is markedly different to that in the UK and Poland. While interviewees did discuss feminist interventions, and anti-sexist attitudes, the backdrop of sexism in the punk scene was far more prevalent and incidents of sexism were far more explicit. Women's participation in Indonesian punk scenes is also noticeably less, as reflected in the interview sample already mentioned above, with just six women out of 37 interviewees in Indonesia (compared with seven out of seventeen in the UK and five out of eighteen in Poland). Wider Indonesian society is also much more sexist than the UK or Poland contexts,[47] which makes the feminist interventions that do occur all the more impressive. As in the UK and Poland, these interventions are informed particularly by anarchism and anarcha-feminism.

- **Feminist activism and interventions in punk in Indonesia**

InstitutA is an anarcha-feminist infoshop which grew out of the Jakarta punk scene. Despite being located in one of the most religiously fundamentalist parts of the Greater Jakarta Area they have openly anti-theist literature in their library and LGBTQ stickers in their windows. The InstitutA group also screenprint patches featuring gay and feminist slogans and imagery, which they sew onto bags and t-shirts to sell in craft markets under the moniker 'Needle 'n' Bitch.' In Indonesia promoting homosexuality is illegal since it contravenes Islamic law, and even making basic feminist statements presents a challenge to Islam, so this kind of propaganda assumes huge significance here. Even within the punk scene their activities are viewed by some as 'something "too much" and not really

[47] Some sexist government policies, especially religiously motivated ones, are discussed below. But as a general indication of the relative position of women in Indonesia, the World Economic Forum recently (October 2015) ranked it 92nd out of 145 countries in terms of gender equality, with the UK 18th and Poland 51st. The report is 'based on economic, educational, health-based and political indicators,' with a bizarrely-phrased interest in 'how well [countries] are leveraging their female talent pool.' http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/ [accessed 27th November 2015]

necessary.'[48] The collective also provide unplanned pregnancy and contraception advice, and even among those punks who otherwise 'gossip and joke' about InstitutA, 'when something bad happen[s]… we receive a call.'[49] This level of feminist activism is fairly exceptional in the punk scene or wider anarchist movement in Indonesia.

Fig. 3.12 – 'Woman's Liberation,' tattoo in Indonesia.

The Bandung Pyrate Punx collective espouse an anti-sexist attitude, have several women within the collective, and in contravention of Indonesian custom, unmarried men and women live together in their Pirata collective house. Dian, a member of the collective, was positive about gender equality in the punk scene in general. She said, '[i]n the punk scene, I don't think it's very difficult … Outside the scene, it's quite difficult being a woman punk. But inside the scene I feel no difficulties, mostly in this collective [Bandung Pyrate Punx] … I am respected and I feel a sense of equality … I feel comfortable and safe.'[50] Nadya, also a member of the Bandung Pyrate Punx collective, concurred with this view, saying, 'we're quite egalitarian.' She also mentioned a feminist gig that had taken place 'about three or four years ago, they called it "regirlution" and I was there, they called me to become the MC of the event.' This is very similar to some of the feminist interventions discussed in the context of the UK, with 'all the bands consist[ing] of at least [one] girl.' However, the point that, in 2012, there had not been another similar event within 'three or four years' suggests that these feminist gigs are a rarity (see also Appendix 7, part C). Indeed, compared to the UK and Poland, feminist activism and interventions in the punk scene were quite limited. Of course, this is not because sexism is less of a problem for punk scenes in Indonesia – the opposite is in fact the case.

- **Sexism in punk in Indonesia**

TRIGGER WARNING

This section contains interviewee testimony which may be triggering for people affected by sexual assault.

[48] Anonymous interview 26/02/2015
[49] Anonymous interview 26/02/2015
[50] Interview conducted 27/09/2012

Despite the generally positive impression of gender relations in Indonesian punk scenes expressed by members of the Pyrate Punx collective, Nadya was conscious of the same kind of gendered division of labour as discussed in the UK and Poland:

> [I]n this punk scene … to be honest I see … not [many] of the girls working like us together as a team, but … many still women do the domestic work, and nobody really knows about the management. The management like the electricity, sound system, and I actually would really like to try to learn about that … I always say like, I take care of all the guys, all the babies I have [laughs] … But I don't really understand about the technic[al] thing[s] like, sound system … so I just like ask [the men], give them division of job.
>
> [There are] not many gir[s] who are active in here really, just like calm, watch[ing].

Fig. 3.13 – Feminist patch in Indonesia.

Nadya also noticed this gendered division at the popular Bandung punk hangout 'PI.' She said:

> there are still some men who think the woman is a part of their, I dunno, I would say like this, sometime[s] the punk guy has a girlfriend, and the girlfriend is gonna be like their groupie. And [the women] like [are] sitting together, always sitting together in the same spot, talking about their things, not joining the men [to] talk about 'the movement,' the working stuff of the movement … Mostly they just like become … the groupies.

However, as mentioned, some women have tried to take on active roles in the punk scene, including playing in bands and organising women-centric gigs. Nadya, though, was critical of the approach of some of the women involved in the 'regirlution' gig. She said, 'I was confused about that, like … actually "what's your aim?" "Oh, we want to be a feminist … we want to be play music like boy[s do]." They said "we want to play music like [a] boy" even though they['re] just like only the singer, they don't play [an] instrument.' Nadya seemed to be suggesting that the 'regirlution' gigs didn't go far enough to challenge gender stereotypes in music, with women taking the familiar, feminine role of singer, rather than instrumentalist. But she also challenged the idea of aspiring to roles normally performed by men. She said, 'what I don't understand [is] what they think about feminism, is [it] because they want to [be] men? Why should you be men? I mean, we [women] have our own capability and you [men] have your own capability.' So rather than challenging gender stereotypes, she seemed to argue that they were natural or justified, as she continued:

> even [when] we live with values, like women have to be in the kitchen, something like that … if you only can do that, should you try to do … men's job? No! I mean actually we don't have to think that way about feminism. OK, you [referring to the interviewer] can, like a guy … go [to] work and have money and I will [be] doing household things … [W]e're just using our talent … [B]ecause if they think they want to be men, it's not feminism.

For a woman who is involved in an anarchist *and expressedly anti-sexist* punk collective to argue for the innateness of gendered labour roles is startling. In the UK and Poland some instances of sexism were evident on the part of *some* men, but the women were usually consciously feminist. Nadya did not describe herself as being anti-feminist either, but the arguments she makes are based in sexist terms and on sexist logic. This suggests that the influence of a very sexist wider society affects punk scenes by making sexism more insidiously prevalent there too, even among members of anarchist groups.

Fig. 3.14 – 'My Mind, My Body, My Choice,' patch in Indonesia.

As elsewhere, an underlying current of sexism inevitably makes itself felt in explicitly abusive terms as well. Eka from the InstitutA collective noted the prevalence of sexism in the punk scene in Jakarta. She said that being a woman meant men in the punk scene were not likely to take her suggestions for activism seriously:

> People are so afraid … when I start to ask, as friends, [to] do something else instead of making gigs and gigs and gigs. Y'know let's start [with] a gig, let's make a zine, or a Food Not Bombs or do something else apart [from] the gigs … [T]hey feel threat[ened] because it came from a woman.

She also pointed to the problem of abusive relationships, and unwillingness on the part of women, or men, to discuss it:

> So many of my friends … especially when they're in a relationship or get married, they treat the girl really really fucking awful … [But] there's no healthy culture of criticising and talking openly about this thing, they['re] just, like, 'it's my thing, it's my personal issue you don't need to interfere with this.'

Eka also discussed the problem of sexual assault from personal experience. As she recalled:

> one time in mosh pit I got … touched, and I f[ou]ght, and … like this guy who touch[ed] me is like this senior, like really cool old guy from this really old punk band. And [then there's] this manhood solidarity thing and *they even blame[d] me*, 'it's your fault, why [are] you in the mosh pit?'[51]

While similar sexual assaults were mentioned in the UK and Poland[52] it was not reported as being directly experienced by the interviewees there, but rather was raised as an example of a problem that would be dealt with severely. In Eka's case the sexually aggressive act of groping is compounded by others in the scene jumping to the defence of the assailant. This was the most explicit instance of sexism reported by any of the interviewees in any of the case studies.

Fig. 3.15 – Pro-gay patch in Indonesia.

Aulia's perspective is particularly interesting for comparative purposes, since she grew up in the United States and was active in the punk scene there, before migrating to Indonesia in 2010. She said, 'I chose … for [the] past two years [to] live in a country that's very male-centric, and very male dominated, and find my place, like still as a woman. [It] has been like pretty difficult. And as an anarchist, and as like a political activist … it's just been pretty strange.' She continued:

> I think it's still … a progression, it's actually a very slow progression here … I feel like the punk[s] and the feminists and the anarchists here … they read zines, and they read books, and … they look at the bands and they kind of adore them, but they don't have a true understanding of like the meaning, sometimes. Like some of them get [it], and some of them don't. But … it's so Indonesian, like, everything's just mixed-up, and so it's totally fine to be a sexual abuser and still be anarchist here.

This is starkly different to the UK and Poland, where sexual abuse, physical or otherwise, is *usually* dealt with robustly by feminist-engaged punk and anarchist scenes. Aulia also pointed to an anti-feminist attitude in the Indonesian punk scene. She said, 'it's not more difficult as an anarchist, it's actually more difficult being like a really active feminist … The women I know here that are really

[51] [emphasis added]
[52] And also in: Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk*, p. 51

stand-up, they're really strong, [they] have a lot of problems here. And a lot of men *and a lot of women* hate them.'[53] Comparing Indonesia to the US, she said:

> it's quite different now, but it's still progressing and I have to remind myself sometimes that, yeah, where I'm from, I'm third/fourth wave feminist and I have so many privileges. And here women are still expected, if you don't get married you're a shit-fuck, you're an asshole, you're a slut, you're a whore, all of these things.

This expression of outright misogyny was rare, *though not totally absent*, in the UK and Poland contexts. Aulia continued:

Fig. 3.16 – Flyer for Needle n' Bitch Collective at InstitutA, Depok – note especially 'Wymns Safe Space.'

> I feel like I have to be more patient with understanding people here, and that doesn't mean tolerating intolerance, but just, I have to be more slow, more patient to understand people here. Because they're still, to me in my interpretation here, this is still like the first-wave of anarchism, of feminism … of radical thinking here.

The extent and explicitness of the sexism is far greater in the context of Indonesia than in the UK or Poland.

So, while there are limited examples of feminist interventions and activism in Indonesian punk, sexism is clearly much more prevalent than in either the UK or Poland, and is of a different character since it is not problematised in the same way (or at all!). Despite this, some of the interviewees expressed positive views about gender equality in the punk scene there. Michelle Liptrot, discussing the UK punk scene, 'question[s] whether females not only tolerate sexism but *also downplay it*.'[54] If that is the case in the UK, then it must be reasonable to argue that it is even more so in Indonesia. However, when interviewees are evaluating their punk scenes, they are doing so in relation to the wider society in which they live. In the case of Indonesia, sexism is endemic, motivated in large part by the dominance of morally conservative religion over state, society, and culture. In Aceh, for example, where Shariah law is implemented, there are overtly sexist prohibitions on women being seen in public without hijab, a ban on unaccompanied women leaving their homes after sunset, and

[53] [emphasis added]
[54] Liptrot, '"Different people with different values but the same overall goals",' p. 222, [emphasis added]

most recently a ban on female passengers straddling motorbikes (forcing them to ride side-saddle).[55] Across Indonesia, the Human Rights Watch NGO recently highlighted the continuing practice of forcing female police and army recruits to undergo 'virginity tests.'[56] Examples of religious repression, sexist and otherwise, are discussed in more detail in the Indonesian case study focus (Chapter 5), but clearly Indonesian society is far more sexist than the UK and Poland. As such, the Indonesian punk scene does actually represent a markedly *less sexist* environment than society in general, even if the Indonesian punk scene remains much less engaged with feminism than the UK or Poland. And once again, despite the differing ways in which sexism is experienced in the Indonesian punk scene, there is a similarity with the UK and Poland in that where feminist interventions do exist, they are informed by anarcha-feminism, as in the case of InstitutA and Bandung Pyrate Punx. In each context sexism *is* being challenged, but the texture of that challenge is heavily influenced by the conditions of each context – there is no universal norm by which to 'judge' the successes or failures of these (as stressed in Said's Orientalism).

Fig. 3.17 – Feminist CrimethInc. posters at InstitutA, Depok.

Case Study Focus A: Conclusion

The clearest examples of feminist activism in all three punk scenes are those engaged with anarchism, though this is seldom a 'perfect' relationship. The punk scene and anarchist movements across the three case studies are markedly more 'progressive' than the societies in which they are situated, in terms of engagements with feminism and efforts to combat sexism. But they remain heavily influenced to some extent by the social relations that are normative in those mainstream societies. This means that in the 'more sexist' society of Indonesia, the punk scenes and anarchist

[55] 'Indonesian province moves to ban women from straddling motorbikes,' (Associated Press article), *The Guardian*, (7th January 2013), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/07/indonesia-aceh-ban-women-motorbikes [accessed 27th November 2015]

[56] Kate Hodal, 'Female Indonesian police recruits forced to undergo "virginity tests",' *The Guardian*, (18th November 2014), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/18/female-indonesian-police-recruits-forced-virginity-test [accessed 27th November 2015], and Ryan Barrell, 'Indonesia's Virginity Test For Female Army Recruits Criticised By Human Rights Campaigners,' *The Huffington Post UK*, (15th May 2015), http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/05/15/indonesia-two-finger-test_n_7290388.html?utm_hp_ref=uk [accessed 27th November 2015]

movement are also 'more sexist' compared to the 'less sexist' UK and Poland. This suggests two things. Firstly, that punk and anarchist scenes, despite their opposition to the oppressive norms of mainstream society, cannot help but be influenced by it. This speaks to issues of insularity and self-ghettoisation, but it is inevitable that participants are drawn from mainstream society into punk scenes, where they are influenced and politicised – as discussed in the politicisation section above. People from 'the outside' must be welcomed into punk scenes in order to expose them to alternative cultural norms. But this process is ongoing, and unreconstructed behavioural norms inherited from mainstream society persist and must be challenged again and again. Secondly, the fact that punk scenes and anarchist movements are similarly, or even identically, impacted by this normative sexism indicates a common level of interaction with mainstream society and a common politics – this is bolstered, and indeed manifested, by the overlapping memberships of anarchist activist groups and punk scenes. Therefore, the exploration of feminism and sexism across the three case study contexts, UK, Poland, and Indonesia, has emphasised the connection between anarchism and punk – even while adding to the complexity of that connection.

CHAPTER 4. CASE STUDY FOCUS B – DIY PUNK IN POLAND: SQUATTING

One of the most notable characteristics of the punk scene in Poland is the importance of squats. The following case study focus will describe how punk happens in Poland, in terms of DIY production of gigs and record releases. Squats are a central feature of Polish punk scenes, much of the research was carried out within their walls, and interviewees repeatedly identified squats as a central aspect of the relationship between anarchism and punk in Poland – so the issues and tensions around them will be examined in some detail.

A gig in Poland

The bass-heavy rumblings became louder and sharper as I descended the narrow concrete staircase into the gloomily-lit basement. This low-ceilinged labyrinth opened onto the gig space where the impressive volume of the band boomed forth from the far end. The band were minimally illuminated by a pair of white spotlights – the drum kit and guitar amps on a low riser flanked by large speakers, the guitarists and singer separated from the statically observing crowd by a few feet of rough concrete floor. The temperature down here was only marginally warmer than the autumn chill outside, so hoodies, jackets, boots, scarves and beanie hats were de rigueur – except for the band's drummer, who was generating enough heat through the relentlessly pumping d-beat to warrant playing topless. Dreadlocks and interestingly shaved and dyed hairstyles were scattered among the crowd, but there were no tall spiked mohawks or the like – probably due to the difficulty of getting a hat over such a follicle arrangement. The sound was clear and loud, the thudding bass drum resonated inside my chest, the rapid tempo racing ahead of my heartbeat. There is a certain irony at loud punk gigs, in that most people in the crowd (and indeed, the bands themselves) are obliged to wear ear plugs. That said, you can't beat the *feeling* of the noise slamming against your body. A few people towards the front of the crowd were motivated to move around, but most remained attentively still, in sharp contrast to the thrashing band on stage.

Przychodnia squat in central Warsaw regularly hosts punk and hardcore gigs, when its dark bowels come alive with the roar of bands from near and far. The living quarters of the former medical drop-in centre[1] are on the upper floors, while the ground floor houses a bar, kitchen, and meeting space. Between bands' performances people congregated in the bar area, listening to music and relaxedly

[1] 'Przychodnia' means health centre or clinic, hence the squat's name.

chatting on the sofas while drinking some local pilsner beer sold for just a few złoty at the bar, which was staffed by squatter volunteers. Some braved the cold to go for a smoke outside. A sign behind the bar advertised Greek-style vegan gyros wraps for sale, made in the kitchen and passed through the hatch in the wall to the bar, again for a very reasonable price. There were several posters on the wall promoting veganism and animal liberation. One of the smaller basement rooms adjacent to the gig space was given over to merchandise (t-shirts, records, tapes, etc.), all produced on a DIY basis, and sold by the bands, particularly the touring band as a way to help fund their travels. The touring band tonight was Lanveraad from the Netherlands, supported by local band Government Flu. Having just two bands is fairly typical. Both bands are fiercely political, and Landveraad even added a little spectacle to their performance by dressing up as 'anarchist superheroes.' The bands played for around 30 or 40 minutes each, with a break of about twenty minutes between them to change over equipment and allow the crowd to replenish their alcohol (and/or nicotine) levels.

Fig. 4.1 – Detail from Sanctus Iuda, *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995).

DIY punk in action in Poland

This gig, like all events at Przychodnia, was organised on a DIY basis. A typical admission charge for a gig like this is around 5zł (less than £1), which is given to the touring bands, while the money from sales of beer and food goes to help with the upkeep of the squat. Interviewee Adrian, who is involved with the Pryzchodnia collective, emphasised the inclusive nature of DIY gigs: 'People get involved, they dance together with the artist, there is no fence between them and the artist.' But as well as removing the barrier between audience and performer (both metaphorically and literally), there is also a dissolution of the divide between the audience and the organisers. For example, Adrian noted that for people lacking the funds to pay the admission fee, 'there is no problem for you to make a shift at the bar, at the door, cleaning shift, whatever. So … the distance between the organisers, the artists, and the audience is much smaller – it's more participants than audience.' Dominik mentioned that full-time or professional gig promoters are a rarity in the Polish punk scene: '[t]here's no promoters … all of the shows are put [on] by just, like, people.' However, Adrian did note that some touring bands do not engage fully with the DIY dynamic:

> There are punk bands who … want to come here, play the show, get the money and get out. Because they are playing music they are 'musicians' … the fact that they are playing

> this kind of music doesn't have to mean anything. But that's not very popular and that's not very common.

In general, touring bands that are playing squat gigs are likely to be politically sympathetic – they may even be involved in squats or anarchist activism in their hometowns. The monetary return for the bands is often less at squat gigs than in commercial venues, but they are guaranteed to be shown excellent hospitality, including beer, food, and accommodation, as part of the DIY 'network of friends' that operates in the international punk scene.

Dominik viewed DIY as an expedient way to organise gigs and record production:

> I think people … are DIY because they realise this is way, way easier, and that all of these things are really simple and if you want to do it, you can do it yourself. It's not big politics behind it, I just don't want to support whoever, whatever … [I]t's cheaper, it's faster, and I have everything under control.

However, Dominik also emphasised the sense of community based around DIY principles, pointing out that DIY bands from different musical genres are more likely to play together than 'two hardcore bands, that will never play a show together because one of them is very DIY, and the other guys have no fucking idea what DIY is … So, *the thing that puts it all together is DIY*, not the kind of music that you play.'[2] While Dominik focused on the practical benefits of DIY, other interviewees were keen to stress its political significance. Marta, who lives in another squat near to Przychodnia in Warsaw, noted that DIY 'builds the … consciousness of how to change your life a bit so you don't have to consume everything that is shown to you,' but also warned against fetishising DIY: 'if you try to push yourself [to spend time on DIY projects] instead of doing something more important, then it's stupid.' Szymon went further, suggesting that DIY practices are intrinsically anarchistic:

> I think it's completely natural … you don't need government to rule you and to say what you have to do, and [if] you want to do such things like DIY stuff, it's natural that you think like the anarchist … You don't have to say [it] that way … but for example if you see a couple of friends who help each other, I can say that's anarchism.

Adrian echoed Szymon's view of DIY as anarchistic, but noted that the ideas:

> are maybe quite different from … the mainstream of anarchist ideas, the syndicalist ideas for example because … I think the sources of the DIY idea … I would look for them maybe … in the American tradition of conservatism actually. The ideas of personal independence.

[2] [emphasis added]

Adrian here points to the core 'lifestylist' versus 'workerist' tension – but in addition to this libertarian impulse he also identified DIY as being anti-capitalist:

> The idea of DIY gives you a personal, or maybe a *collective* liberty right? Also the idea of exchanging work, but not in the sense of paying someone else for the work but, y'know, 'I will help you build an oven in your house and you will help me paint my room' … it's also a socialising way of exchanging time, work, and commodities … [W]hich is quite the opposite of what capitalism is doing.[3]

This collective and anti-capitalist dimension is a crucial aspect of DIY in punk, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. But, as much as DIY might have some success in this regard, Adrian recognises that 'it's all the time under pressure from the system, from the capitalist system.' In addition to the attempts by the state and private landowners to shut down squats (discussed in more detail below), capitalist economic and social relations still work their way into these avowedly anti-capitalist spaces. As Adrian notes: 'People have to buy stuff, it requires money to run this kind of place. Even if you get food from the dumpster [skip] or as much materials as you can, it's kind of impossible 100%, which produces new kinds of conflicts.' But, even with these inevitable limitations, Adrian argued that DIY (and squatting) offers some socially transformative potential:

Fig. 4.2 – Mural at Rozbrat, Poznań.

> So, I think I would call it like a laboratory or experimental area where we actually get to see which kind of conflicts are generated by this kind of society, plus some extra traditional conflicts from the capitalist society. [Y]ou see … how the transition works, you get from the outside world and you get into here, how difficult it is to internalise the local [squat] rules, to follow them … You actually can see on a small scale how those things work … You can call it a model of an ideal society. A very early model … a very simple one, and a very narrow one, because there are many … areas of life which cannot be affected if you just have one space like this.

[3] [emphasis added]

So while Adrian recognises the limitations placed on DIY and squatting by the totalising capitalist system, he still recognises the valuable opportunity they provide to live-out anarchist politics on a practical level.

Record production is also organised on a DIY basis in Polish punk scenes. Dominik, who runs a small DIY label in Wrocław, said:

> basically there are no punk records that are put out by labels that are not DIY. All of them, I'm serious, like all of them … And all of this will be DIY, like since the beginning 'til the end … recording it to putting it out, and to the whole distribution … there's nothing from [the] mainstream involved in [the] Polish scene. And I think it's good personally. Some people say it's not very good, but for me it's OK. It works pretty good.

DIY in Poland has been successful in terms of touring networks for bands and record production and distribution, to the extent that no other model is encountered. Beyond the inevitable infiltration of capitalist relations into anti-capitalist spaces such as squats, selling-out is also a major concern for DIY punk in Poland, as everywhere. The only Polish punk band to ever sign to a major label was Dezerter, who released a record (*Ziemia jest płaska)* on Warner in 1998. Dominik noted that they were widely criticised for doing so, but he considered that Dezerter had 'paid back their scenes in some way, because they got back … to [a] small label, and basically of course, it also helped [that] the records that they put out on [the] major label were good.' This echoes the excuses put forward in defence of sell-outs by bands like Chumbawamba in the UK, as will be discussed further in Chapter 6. Interviewee Kinga played in a very prominent band in Poland during the 1990s, who were also approached by major labels: 'We had an opportunity to sell-out, but … the big record label they were searching for a band, maybe not for a band, but for a girl singer … [laughs]. They told me, "get rid of those boys and we will give you the opportunity to be a star."' Of course, they refused the offer:

> *[T]hat was the only right thing to do*. There was no other choice. I mean like, maybe not every one of us, because [one member of the band] … wanted to earn money, simply by playing music. Which is kind of, y'know, understandable. You do something [that you] like doing and you want to … live, right? Get some money [laughs], yeh? ... This is a dilemma actually, this is the ever-lasting problem. How to deal with that? I love playing music, I would love to be paid fairly for that, but well, there's always a compromise. You don't play in the good places, the nice places, the friendly places, like the DIY places which are the best. And … they very often tell you what to do, right? I mean, the label, if you sign a

> contract. And that [was] what we were aware of, all the time, and we didn't want to sign. We even got one contract from that label, and we started reading that in our car home, and it was like 'what is that? Long term? Meaning what? Long term? Like What? Five years, five records? Nah.' So we didn't sign.[4]

So for Kinga's band the main motivation for remaining DIY was to retain control and independence, as well as a desire to keep playing gigs at 'the DIY places,' such as squats. Indeed, squats are of key importance to the punk scene in many cities in Poland, and as will be discussed below the politics of space is crucially important for the punk scenes and their relationship to the anarchist movement in the UK and Indonesia too.

Squatting and anarchism

As Colin Ward notes:

> of course, there has always been a distinction between squatting as a political demonstration, from that … [of] squatting as a personal solution to a housing problem. In the first instance the intention is, for propagandist purposes, to be noticed. In the second, the hope is to be inconspicuous and to blend into the landscape.[5]

In many cases, squatting simply represents a practical solution to homelessness and occurs with no 'political' motivation (though the existence of homelessness in society is deeply 'political' in itself). However, contrary to those who see the squatter movement 'as being a social and cultural phenomenon – for some even a social problem,' René Karpantschof and Flemming Mikkelsen take the position 'that the squatter movement is first and foremost a *political* phenomenon.'[6] Indeed, it is difficult to dispute that squatting has numerous intrinsically anarchistic qualities, and this is made explicit in many squatting actions. The autonomist-Marxist writer Geronimo asks (rhetorically) whether 'squatting demonstrate[s] yet another form of libertarian-anarchist communism?'[7] In Ward's view, certainly yes. For example, he viewed the squatters' movement in the UK in the aftermath of World War II, 'which saw ordinary working-class families take over and adapt disused military bases, as an example of the human tendency for direct and cooperative self-help, and thus a

[4] [emphasis added]
[5] Colin Ward, *Cotters and Squatters. Housing's Hidden History*, (Nottingham: Five Leaves, 2009 [2002]), pp. 167-168
[6] René Karpantschof and Flemming Mikkelsen, 'Youth, Space, and Autonomy in Copenhagen: The Squatters' and Autonomous Movement, 1963-2012,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 185
[7] Geronimo, 'Foreword,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. xiii

key model of "*anarchy in action*".'[8] As Ward puts it: 'Squatting is an example of *direct action* applied to the housing problem in a non-revolutionary situation,'[9] while Hans Pruijt suggests that this activist mentality can be transferred into other areas of life: '[s]quatters can take the notion of applying direct action, and their experience with it, to sundry troubled spots in society.'[10] Ward describes squatting as 'a political education,'[11] which has an important 'effect on the participants':

> As I said in the book *Anarchy in Action*, it 'reveals a great deal about the state of mind that is induced by free and independent action, and that which is induced by dependence and inertia: the difference between people who initiate things and act for themselves and people to whom things just happen.'[12]

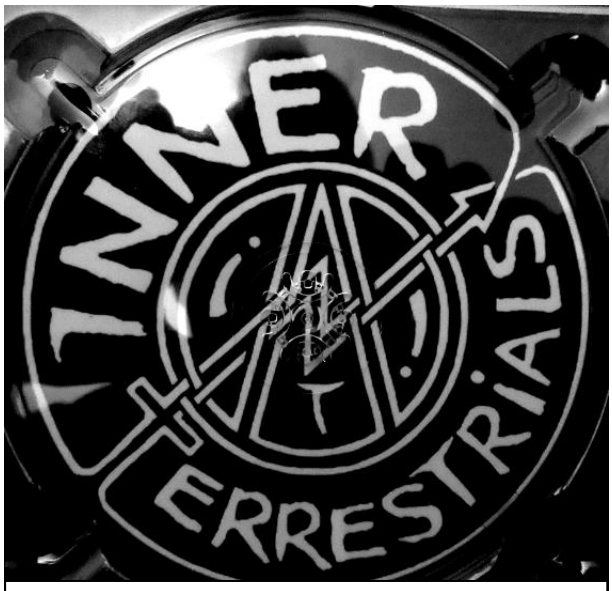

Fig. 4.3 – Anarchist squatter symbol, as used by Inner Terrestrials, on *IT!* (Mass Prod, General Strike, Active Distro, 1997).

Lucy Finchett-Maddock identifies the sense of empowerment in the squatting movement of the late-1960s onwards, quoting Gerald Dworkin to describe it as 'a harbinger of a new style of social and political activity that changes demoralised and helpless people from being the objects of social policy to becoming active fighters in their own cause.'[13] This bears striking similarity to the interviewees' emphasis on the empowering aspect of DIY practices and ethics in the punk scene, discussed above. The Squatters and Homeless Autonomy (SHA) Collective[14] in London argue that squatting engenders an '[o]ppositional self-identity … [which] continues to make squatting a threat to cultural power' by adding to 'larger *cultures of resistance*.'[15] Pruijt concurs, but notes that:

[8] Carissa Honeywell, *A British Anarchist Tradition. Herbert Read, Alex Comfort and Colin Ward*, (London: Continuum, 2011), p. 141, [emphasis added]
[9] Colin Ward, *Housing: an anarchist approach*, (London: Freedom Press, 1976), p. 25, [emphasis added]
[10] Hans Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe. Radical Spaces, Urban Struggles*, Squatting Europe Kollective (eds.), (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013), p. 29
[11] Ward, *Housing: an anarchist approach*, p. 125
[12] Colin Ward and David Goodway, *Talking Anarchy*, (Oakland: PM Press, 2014 [first published Nottingham: Five Leaves Press, 2003]), pp. 81-82, [*Anarchy In Action* reference not given]
[13] Lucy Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London: Squatters' Rights and Legal Movement(s),' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 213, quoting Gerald Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 31
[14] Not to be confused with SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty).
[15] SHA Collective communiqué, *Against Apolitical Squatting*, https://www.facebook.com/squatterhomelessautonomy/ [accessed 11th November 2015], [emphasis added]

> [i]deology is only loosely coupled to practice … [which] allows for considerable freedom when creating an ideology around squatting such as instant anarchism, i.e. suddenly discovered with little influence from the anarchist tradition, or ideologies with an anti-capitalist or anti-property rights theme.[16]

The Needle Collective and the Bash Street Kids also argue that the squatting/direct action 'scene's politics are not always clear-cut or universal, but they do revolve around such ideas as activism for social change, non-hierarchical decision-making, and a DIY ethos.'[17] The SHA Collective argue that squatting 'has always meant struggle' and that there is a 'permanent need to politicise' these struggles.[18] In a communiqué titled *Against Apolitical Squatting* they stress that squatting is only viable *because* it is 'political':

> A squatted space not used for politics soon loses the politics of squatted spaces. Creating spaces intolerant to social hierarchy and state surveillance, for organising and consciousness-raising, is integral to the creation of effective resistance in squats *and on the streets*.[19]

So while the politics of squatting, and the political motivation for particular squatting actions, might sometimes be hazy in terms of theory, it is possible to recognise squats as 'symbols of *anarchist*, "autonomous," and "free" spaces,'[20] which are an example of 'the libertarian way of organising' which has been a constant in European 'radical urban youth movements' since 1968.[21]

Ward points to the potential for social transformation that squatting represents, writing that 'the late Eric Mattocks, a founder and treasurer of the Advisory Service for Squatters … sought to stress that squatting was not merely a demonstration, it was *an initiator of social change*.'[22] And, as the SHA Collective note, squatting is directly opposed to the underlying hegemonic ideology of capitalism, and as such: 'Squatting continues to prove itself as direct action against power.'[23] Squatting represents a challenge to unequal distribution of property and the concept of private property itself, and this is a crucial aspect, because as Ward argues (quoting Kropotkin): 'Once the

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[16] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 28
[17] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow: Autonomy and squatting in Brighton, 1973-2012,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 153
[18] SHA Collective communiqué, *Against Apolitical Squatting*
[19] Ibid. [emphasis added]
[20] Nazima Kadir, 'Myth and Reality in the Amsterdam Squatters' Movement,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 22, [emphasis added]
[21] Bart van der Steen, Ask Katzeff, and Leendert van Hoogenhuijze, 'Introduction: Squatting and Autonomous Action in Europe, 1980-2012,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 8
[22] Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, p. 165, [emphasis added]
[23] SHA Collective communiqué, *Against Apolitical Squatting*

principle of the "Divine Right of Property" is shaken, no amount of theorising will prevent its overthrow.'[24] And in fact, state authorities adopting a stringently neo-liberal view of sacrosanct private property rights repress squatting on *exactly* these grounds, as will be discussed below.

- **Squats/social centres and punk**

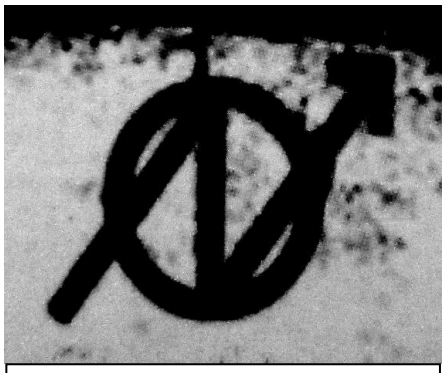

Fig. 4.4 – Detail from Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011).

Squats and punk culture are often closely related, which is especially the case for politically engaged squats (although there exists a certain tension between 'cultural' squatting and 'activist' squatting, as will be explored below). Van der Steen, Katzeff, and van Hoogenhuijze emphasise 'the link between radical politics and subculture,' arguing that in both 'squatted houses' and 'rented social centres … the focus on … youth and alternative lifestyles remains a constant' – they identify punk (and hardcore) as key examples of this.[25] Finchett-Maddock argues that punk 'is *automatically* connected to the squatting movement through their freeing of space and anti-authoritarian practices.'[26] Indeed, in countries where squatting movements have emerged more recently, punk has been a crucial catalyst. After the fall of the fascist dictatorship in Spain, 'the first punk bands were formed, [which were] the precursors of the first squatting activity in Barcelona.'[27] Punks also introduced squatting to Poland, and other former Eastern Bloc countries, as will be discussed below. And even in countries like the UK or the Netherlands, where squatting has a longer historical narrative, a 'prevalence of punk squats'[28] developed by the 1980s. Van der Steen, Katzeff, and van Hoogenhuijze argue that punk's impact on the squatting movement was reciprocated, with 'the punk subculture [being] nourished by the 1980s squatter movement.'[29] Interviewee George in the UK identified the DIY ethos as a commonality between punk and squatting. He said, 'I think a lot of punks, because of their DIY attitude and their DIY sort of skills, tend to be people who set things up.' Cattaneo and Tudela also point to the importance of 'DIY culture' in punk's connection to

[24] Ward, *Housing: an anarchist approach*, p. 25, [Kropotkin reference not given]
[25] van der Steen et al, 'Introduction,' in *The City Is Ours*, pp. 8-9
[26] Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 220
[27] Claudio Cattaneo and Enrique Tudela, '*¡El Carrer Es Nostre!* The Autonomous Movement in Barcelona, 1980-2012,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 98
[28] Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 214
[29] van der Steen et al, 'Introduction,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 11

squatting.[30] Steven Taylor, from the US, toured in Europe with his band False Prophets in the 1990s, and noted that the 'squats and co-ops of Europe showed that anarchist communal culture and activism was widespread.'[31] And as Taylor suggests, co-operatives and rented social centres are often sites where punk culture is also harboured, and despite not being squats they retain a close connection with anarchism. Kate Wimpress, who was involved with the Warzone Collective's punk-associated social centre in Belfast, was explicit about the political emphasis there, even though it was a legally rented space: 'We aspired to run the centre on anarchist principles … we were trying to create a new society.'[32] (The Warzone Collective's social centres will be discussed in greater detail below).

During the research it was interesting to note that the punk scene in Poland was more closely associated with squats than the UK, where rented social centres have taken on increased importance in the wake of anti-squatting legislation. In both Poland and the UK, punk gigs still often occur in commercial spaces such as bars, but in Indonesia there is almost no option other than commercial spaces, because of a lack of squats or social centres. Because of squatting's close relationship with anarchism these differing manifestations of 'punk space' across the three case studies speaks to the relationships between anarchism and punk too.

Squats, social centres and punk in Poland

- **Punk squats in Poland**

As discussed above, punk has a close association with squatting in many parts of the world, and whereas in other European countries there are significant parts of the squatting movement with little or no connection to punk, the overlap appears to be nearly ubiquitous in Poland. Of course, there are at least *a few* squats in Poland which are not connected to punk, as will be discussed below, and while squats are extremely important for Polish punk scenes, punk gigs do often occur in commercial venues, such as bars – however, these gigs are likely to feature bands that are less engaged with anarchist politics. Several interviewees stressed the punk/squat connection: Dominik said, 'squats in Poland equal punk.' Rafa likewise stated, 'all the squats are punk squats.' Pawel noted that, until very recently, 'the squatter's movement was *very strictly connected* with [the] punk

[30] Cattaneo and Tudela, '*¡El Carrer Es Nostre!*' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 116
[31] Taylor, *False Prophet*, p. 3
[32] Kate Wimpress of the Warzone Collective interviewed in *The Day the Country Died*, Roy Wallace (dir.)

scene.'[33] Szymon further backed this up, saying, 'my first experiences with anarchism and [the] punk scene … were *of course* on the squat.'[34] Grzegorz Piotrowski concurs, writing that the squatting scene which 'began in the mid-1990s, was limited to anarchist and punk subcultures.'[35] One notable exception to this conflation of punk and squatting in Poland is Syrena squat in Warsaw. However, even here the connection between punk and squatting is acknowledged. Marta, who lives at Syrena, and was otherwise critical of punk, conceded that 'it is a really big connection, because for the moment … in Poland … there is not that many squats just for living, most of them are punk squats.' So the connection is understood as being very strong indeed.

Fig. 4.5 – Squat logo near Wagenburg, Wrocław.

Squats are central to many Polish punk scenes, so it is important to examine them in some detail. As discussed above, squats provide infrastructure for punk gigs while emphasising the political aspects of punk (both in terms of squats as spaces in opposition to private property/capitalism, and in terms of squats as bases for wider political activism), but the tensions thrown-up in the relationships between punk and squatting also speak to the wider relationships between punk and anarchist politics. Squats are also where Polish punk most tangibly experiences repression, both in the form of attempts from the state and private landowners to evict them, and in the form of physical attacks from street-level fascist groups (as discussed above). It is impossible to properly understand the relationship between anarchism and punk in Poland without due consideration of the influence of squats. As a result, much of the research conducted in Poland was based around squats: in Poznań – Rozbrat and Odzysk; in Wrocław – Wagenburg and CRK; in Warsaw – Syrena, Przychodnia, and also interviews with people from the recently evicted Elba squat (who subsequently opened a new space named ADA Pulawska).[36] Hans Pruijt, in his overview of squatting in Western Europe, succinctly identifies the 'unique property' of

[33] [emphasis added]
[34] [emphasis added]
[35] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 251
[36] Piotrowski notes that 'there were and are also squats in Gdańsk, Toruń … Gliwice, and Białystok.' (Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 233)

squatting as: 'combining self-help with demonstrating an alternative and a potential for protest.'[37] He argues that squatting, particularly when identified as an alternative housing strategy:[38]

> seems to have everything going for it. It is open to everyone, regardless of social class, it is interesting for resourceful activists but can simultaneously offer a haven for vulnerable people. It allows a wide range of skills to be exercised, empowers and produces fun instead of a display of misery.[39]

The issue of openness is not as straightforward as Pruijt suggests and will be dealt with in more detail below, but in general this understanding of squats readily applies in Poland. However, there were also important differences between some of the squats, which created tensions and disagreements about purpose and tactics. These tensions were frequently framed in terms of certain squats being 'more anarchist' or 'less anarchist' compared to others. Consideration of these tensions will therefore be informative to the wider relationship between punk and anarchism.

As Grzegorz Piotrowski notes: '[s]quatting in the former communist bloc is a very different phenomenon than its counterparts in Western Europe or in the United States':[40]

> With the exception of Hungary, where a local punk band managed to occupy some buildings in 1986 and 1987 for a short period of time as part of the initiative *Mindent Akarunk* (We All Want It), squatting has almost no tradition in Central and Eastern Europe prior to 1989.[41]

Squatting in Poland is shaped by the country's abrupt transition from centrally (mis)managed socialist economy to rampant profit-driven neo-liberal capitalism. This rupture created the need to squat (since housing was no longer provided by the state), the opportunities to squat (with property ownership often becoming a contested or confused issue), but also created the most significant pressures *against* squatting (primacy of private-property rights, gentrification, evictions). Squatting is illegal in Poland, but the law leaves some small leeway, as Piotrowski writes: 'in Poland, squatting

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[37] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 51

[38] Pruijt divides squatting into five identifiable types: deprivation-based squatting; squatting as an alternative housing strategy; entrepreneurial squatting; conservational squatting; political squatting. The punk squats more-or-less fall into Pruijt's category of squatting as an alternative housing strategy, but somewhere like Syrena straddles squatting as an alternative housing strategy, conservational squatting, and political squatting. And in terms of defence of squats, the tactics Pruijt attributes to entrepreneurial squats are also deployed by alternative housing strategy squats and political squats. So while the typology is interesting from a theoretical perspective, in practice it fails to reflect the tactics and approaches of Polish squats.

[39] Ibid. p. 49

[40] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 251

[41] Ibid. p. 249

is generally a felony [crime], especially when one has to break into the building to occupy it … Trespassing, however, is not prosecuted heavily.'[42]

Fig. 4.6 – Housing campaign banners on the outside of Syrena squat, Warsaw.

Buildings and other properties that had come under state control during the socialist regime are being restituted to the descendents of their pre-1945 owners.[43] However, Marta, who lives at Syrena squat, noted that 'there is no regulation … about how to do that.' This creates serious problems, and opens up the opportunity for property developers to take advantage of the situation. Marta explained how this process typically operates: 'There is a situation where … someone … I dunno, a grandson of a former owner … gets back the building. And usually … they don't have enough money … to keep the building or to renovate it, or sometimes they just don't care because they live somewhere [else].' At this point the property developers, who are closely informed of these changes in ownership, step in to offer the new owners a lump sum for the property. As far as the new owners are concerned, even if the offer is significantly below market value, this is a good deal – instant cash for a property they may not have known they owned (though of course, many survivors know very well what their families lost), and the relief of the responsibility of owning an old building likely in need of repair, and the rates payable to the state. Once the property developers have control of the building their primary concern is maximising their return, which means gentrification and getting rid of the current tenants. Marta explained that they are often ruthless in this regard: 'They are fucking bastards, yeh? 'Cause they just evict people … in a really cruel way. Raising the rent super-high and cutting off the electricity, gas everything. So … actually, [the tenants are] evicted on the street. So this is a big problem.' Piotrowski notes that, despite

[42] Ibid. p. 233
[43] More information on this policy can be found here - http://propertyrestitution.pl/ [accessed 31st March 2015]

housing laws stating 'current tenants must be given a three-year notice … companies have been established that specialise in the "cleaning" of such houses, with workers cutting off electricity and water pipes and using other means to get rid of the people living there.'[44] Opposition to this deliberate gentrification, which is particularly rapid in Warsaw, forms a main political focus for squats in Poland (as elsewhere). In fact, an eviction resulting from the 'cleaning' process just described was the impetus, and opportunity, for Syrena squat. They were able to squat a recently evicted house, and actually enable some of the evicted tenants to move back in (as squatters). The overtly political nature of this squat encourages support from the local community who find themselves at risk because of gentrification. This in turn provides some measure of security against eviction, since the city government has to act with sensitivity in such cases – as will be discussed further below.

Squats also have political significance beyond the housing issues to which they directly relate. Adrian, who is involved with the Przychodnia collective, emphasised the propagandistic value of squats:

> The social centres, as long as they are visible, they are also sending a message, which starts from 'you can live in a different way, and be happy, and you don't have to take a loan which you will have to pay off until you are 70 to have a place to live.' And then they are also sending a message … to make a campaign against gentrification, make a campaign against animal abuse, to make a campaign against whatever they want … [T]hey are more visible, they are more interesting for the media, so it's easier for these places to spread [a] message about state repression, for example.

So squats, in addition to their political value *as squats*, also provide organising space and a platform for the benefit of other intersectionally related political campaigns or causes. However, in the 'ideological climate in post-communist Poland,' gaining support from the local community is a challenge, as Piotrowski writes:

> One of the consequences of the post-communist transition is the shift toward understanding property rights in a purely (neo)liberal way. Hence, every property occupation – even if the property is abandoned – gains little or no popular support. On the contrary, such groups located outside of the mainstream discourse can be regarded as nearly criminal and dismissed from serious debate or discussion. Groups such as squatters

[44] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 240

are also often connected with the left side of the political spectrum, which is still an issue in the public discourse because of the communist past.[45]

So the political aspect is crucial, both for those involved in squatting in Poland and for those who would seek to repress it.

- **Tensions between punk squats and non-punk squats in Poland**

Fig. 4.7 – 'Reclaim The City!' Mural at Syrena, Warsaw.

As discussed, while anarchism has an especially close association with squatting, a range of ideologies motivate different squats and squatters, and tensions between differing approaches are nothing new. Common areas of disagreement include: the use and function of squatted spaces, i.e. openness to the wider public versus focus on a particular subcultural identity, or the use of space for activist purposes versus squatting as an end in itself; and compromise (or lack thereof) with the authorities, i.e. attempting to remain 'respectable' versus violent resistance to eviction and repression. The issue of dealing with the authorities will be explored in more detail below, especially regarding legal rented social centres, but as Colin Ward makes clear, the tensions around this go back to the 1960s at least. Analysing Ron Bailey's account of squatting at that time, Ward notes that the squatters:

> were in fact walking on a tightrope. On the one side were 'respectable' pressure groups like Shelter whose director was at first critical of the campaign because it might alienate the general public … and of the 'hippy' squatters … who 'were a factor which tended to hinder the development of a mass squatting campaign among the working class.'[46]

Ward argues that 'as time goes by … it becomes difficult to distinguish between the two categories of squatter,'[47] but on the contrary, it appears that disagreement and division between different

[45] Ibid. 252
[46] Ward, *Housing: an anarchist approach*, p. 30, quoting Ron Bailey, *The Squatters*, (London: Penguin, 1973), [page number not given]
[47] Ward, *Housing: an anarchist approach*, p. 30

groups of squatters is a recurring theme. Nazima Kadir draws a tension between 'parasites' and 'politicos' in Amsterdam, differentiating 'between activists who mainly identified as squatters versus activists who resided in squats but primarily invested their time and energy in other radical left issues.'[48] In their September 2015 communiqué, the Squatters and Homeless Autonomy Collective in London complain that:

> squatters have offered up liberated spaces only to become the silent facilitator among other rebels and radicals. Seen mainly as preparation for actions and events, squatting features more in the context than the content.[49]

Pruijt notes the importance of 'squatting as an end in itself [as] part of the movement's *identity*,' which he argues 'offers a barrier against cooptation.'[50] Adrian made this point as well: 'squats, social centres, they still do [have an impact] because … they cannot be taken by capitalism, because that's exactly what [squats] are against … I can't really imagine a way in which a place like this could be commercialised.' This sense of a squatting identity or culture that stands apart from, and in opposition to, capitalism raises an important issue. As Pruijt writes: 'choosing to assume a countercultural/political identity [can result in] only attracting members of a highly exclusive "scene".'[51] This scene is very often drawn from punk – especially so in Poland. Pruijt cites Marco, from Leiden's Eurodusnie collective, on this issue, and his criticisms of 'the Dutch squatter scene [as] being exclusive,' which Marco contrasted to 'the large number of social centres in Italy, which he describes as central gathering places for the "anti-capitalistic part of the population" while also appealing to a wide variety of people.'[52] This kind of criticism has been levelled at punk squats in Poland. Pruijt argues that the absence of a particular squatter (i.e. punk) identity can result in 'becoming culturally mainstream and *non-political*.'[53] However, in terms of the tension between identifiably punk squats, and squats which are intended to be easily accessible to the wider public, Pruijt's analysis does not fit. In fact, the criticisms against the punk squats is that they are not political enough, because they are overly concerned with culture and identity, while the 'activist' squats make every effort to be open to the general public in their political campaigns. As Piotrowski puts it, the tensions centre around:

> the question of the openness … and the balancing between the 'subcultural ghetto' model (where the squat mainly serves a counter-cultural function for a specific group) and the

[48] Kadir, 'Myth and Reality in the Amsterdam Squatters' Movement,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 35
[49] SHA Collective communiqué, *Against Apolitical Squatting*
[50] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 51 [emphasis added]
[51] Ibid. p. 35
[52] Ibid. citing Marco, 'Radicaal Links in Nederland Sluit Zich Op in de Marge,' in *Ravage* vol. 5 no. 1 (2000), p. 14
[53] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 35

> 'social centre' model (which is more focussed on politics and on mobilising broad coalitions of people).[54]

This issue is played-out in the tensions between Przychodnia and Syrena, two neighbouring squats in Warsaw. Przychodnia is certainly identifiable as a punk squat in terms of the people who live there, the activities it hosts, and its general aesthetic. However, as Marta, a Syrena squatter who was formerly involved in the Warsaw punk scene, put it, punk squats are:

> just about the music, which I think is really stupid, and it leads to nothing. I mean, maybe I'm … not a good person to speak about it, because now, the last years, I have a really bad opinion about punk squats and in general [the] punk scene … Punk music and the punk songs, lyrics, or the punk scene can give you this power to do something, to *feel* it. But then I think it should be something more, y'know? … My problem with the punk scene is that, of course they are people who feel it really deeply … but also then, they care … about fashion, about friends, about their position in the group. So basically it leads to shows, travelling to festivals, wearing precise clothes, with proper bands. Kind of childish I think.

Indeed, Marta was one of very few people at Syrena with any past connection to the punk scene, and there was the sense of an anti-punk sentiment from some of the Syrena squatters. As a result, perhaps, I was only able to secure one interview with anyone at Syrena, despite persistent requests and some stretched patience (though Syrena did generously allow me to stay in their guest room for several days and to share in communal meals). This may have been one occasion where my punk 'insider' status actually served as a drawback to the research, as discussed in the methodology.

Przychodnia was actually first squatted by a group of people associated with Syrena as part of a tenants' movement demonstration in the wake of the high-profile eviction of the long-running Elba squat. This was to give a clear statement said Marta, 'that "if you evict one house, we will squat ten more."' She explained that Przychodnia:

> was supposed to be like a symbolic place, and also the idea was that maybe people that were evicted from Elba could live here. But in the end it turned out … that neither people from the former collective that wanted to start this place, nor people from Elba collective [wanted to] live here. So … a few … like really random people … moved in, and it took a while, and they started to do some things on their own.

[54] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, pp. 242-243

Przychodnia became the main venue for punk gigs in the city, largely filling the void that had been left by Elba squat in that respect. This was a problem for Syrena because, said Marta:

> basically the thing that happened [was] that [the] neighbours started to hate us [laughs], because it's too loud y'know … Like for us, because we are next door, it's also really important to build a good relation[ship] with the neighbours … We were already existing for one year here, and we were doing a lot of things for the local community, so it was really important to keep it that way, because it's really strong support.

Aside from the potential impact of noisy punk gigs on neighbourly relations, Marta also felt that the Przychodnia space could be put to better use: 'Over there, nothing is happening. They're … not even supporting, that much, our initiatives.' The only cooperation Marta noted was occasions when Syrena used Przychodnia's space for benefit gigs, or to paint large banners. Syrena is involved in a number of campaigns around housing issues and the tenants' movement, as well as campaigns against FRONTEX,[55] and several community outreach initiatives, such as language and music classes. Marta argued that Syrena would be less effective in these roles if it carried the same punk aesthetic as other Polish squats:

> Syrena is something really fresh and different from the stuff that was happening before, and I think that the power of that place is that it's completely not connected to [the] punk scene … So let's imagine this, for example, tenants that have the housing problem, they are coming. I mean, as a punk squat, if you even try to do something for them, they would feel uncomfortable in the space, yeh? OK, it's based on some stereotypes, but still. And I notice that here [in Syrena], this place started to be more open … it's open also for people that don't have this punk uniform.

Syrena's aesthetic is intended to be less alienating to outsiders than a punk squat, for example by painting many of the walls white. Grzegorz, who is involved in the anarcho-syndicalist group *Związek Syndykalistów Polski* (ZSP – Association of Polish Syndicalists) and with anti-fascist activities, was dismissive of squatting in general, saying, 'I really don't care about squats,' but offered this analysis of Przychodnia and Syrena:

> Generally Syrena is a bit more [of an] ideological squat … but Przychodnia is completely punk and *not political* … And [in] Przychodnia, [the] people who started this squat were intelligent and ideological people, but after [a] little time they left and people who stayed

[55] FRONTEX is the European Union's 'border management' agency, with its headquarters in Warsaw. Syrena, and other groups, are critical of their actions as being fascistic, racist, and anti-asylum seeker.

are only Jabol punx … Jabol is very cheap wine prepared from apples, and [a] Jabol punk is a punk who only drinks this wine … [Przychodnia is] only parties. Parties, punk rock, and nothing more.[56]

Fig. 4.8 – Board outside Syrena, advertising events such as accordion lessons.

Grzegorz's view of Przychodnia, and punk generally, is quite damning then. Marta played down the idea of a dispute between the neighbouring squats: 'No, I don't think that there is a tension [with Przychodnia] … I really like these people y'know … and sometimes we go to drink a beer, sometimes we drink a coffee together, just talking about life, and it's really nice. I'm also going to the shows and so on.' She continued, however: 'it's just that I don't agree with, I mean, I cannot see any connection between [the] punk scene and punk squats and anarchism that much.' This is the essential point – Grzegorz described Przychodnia as 'not political' and Marta felt that it was not anarchist, *because of its association with punk*. This echoes the dismissal of punk described at the very start of this thesis, but while Grzegorz's stance is a typically 'workerist' anti-lifestylism, Marta's critique is from *within* the 'lifestylist' activism of squatting. So again, the terms of the 'lifestylist'/'workerism' tension are evident, but shown to be far more complex than a simple dichotomy.

The squatters at Przychodnia were conscious of the differences in approach between Syrena and themselves, and were also well aware of the criticisms that had been levelled at them. Pawel, who had lived at Elba prior to its eviction, and was now involved with Przychodnia, summed up the difference. 'Probably you feel it,' he said, 'here is more like … punk and subcultural, and creating the society actually … In Syrena it's more about like coming to the neighbours, especially the poor people in the neighbourhood.' He diplomatically assessed that 'both things are OK, and both things can have problems.' As well as hosting regular punk gigs, Przychodnia is involved in other activities, some examples of which Rafa described:

[56] [emphasis added]

> We have a kind of cinema here … ['piknik'] events like today[57] … different kinds of debates, meetings about social problems … Different groups, like there's one anti-fascist group, a new one … like a queer group … I mean … you can't call it [a] social centre, absolutely not, it's more like y'know, [a] cultural centre.

Fig. 4.9 – Poster for the 'Piknik' event at Przychodnia, Warsaw.

This emphasis on 'culture' was understood to mean less emphasis on 'political' activism. Rafa continued: 'here is a little bit like it was in Elba. They were just, y'know, creating a small autonomy':

> Like we have our own world here and … we do here what we want. You don't like [it]? You don't have to participate, this is our way of life, right? We like punk rock, we like shows, sometimes we organise some meetings or debates, or something like that, or festivals, like this political festival, Resistance Festival, was in Przychodnia, the next one probably will also be here. So it's not like guys here are completely out of politics.

But even the idea of 'being political' is not straight forward, as Rafa explained:

> Guys here are … not really into this political stuff. I mean, if you talk with [them] they're really political, and they have very y'know, straight ideas about life … most of them [laughs] at least … Because punk rock … it's [a] political thing. So … it's very difficult to say you are political or you are not political.

So, while Przychodnia is 'political' in a broad sense, it is recognised as being more culturally focussed and less narrowly 'political' than their more activist neighbours in Syrena. This echoes the 'political' versus 'non political' divergence described above in the UK. However, in the UK this 'split' was observed *within* the punk scene, while in Poland punk *as a whole* was dismissed as 'non political.' This difference in approach was the source of some tension. Rafa described the situation as 'completely freaky,' because the divisions between groups meant people 'don't give a shit,' viewing other groups as 'fuckers' or 'not true squatters, or … *not true anarchists*,'[58] as is clearly reflected in

[57] The 'piknik' was organised as a family fun day for the local community, with a vegan barbecue, and some entertainment. Punk bands were not included in the list of bands performing – perhaps underlining Marta's points about the alienating effect of the punk aesthetic.
[58] [emphasis added]

the opinions expressed by Marta and Grzegorz, above. Rafa viewed that Syrena had attempted to interfere in the running of Przychodnia:

> Actually it's quite funny because they call themselves anarchists, and sometimes it looks like they're very authoritarian … It's like when they come here, for example, and say 'OK, these are the rules and from now, you have to obey these rules.' Y'know, [the] position of someone who is looking from up to down.

Rafa continued:

> It's weird. Instead of supporting our activities and understand[ing] that people are different, and they have different needs … [they're] just saying 'hey guys, you should do this, or that.' So for me it's like building these power-relations … 'Cause their position is like … 'we know better … what activism is, and what squatting is' and so on. That's why people here [at Przychodnia] they just … feel strange about it. Because from the beginning they don't feel that they are accepted by people from Syrena, right? ... I mean they don't say it straight … but the way [in which] they express some things you can imagine that the idea is, 'hey, it would be good if you just move out and we will squat this place, because we know what to do with such [a] great building, right, because … what you are doing with this building, this is shit. It's like wasting space and energy and everything.'

Rafa said that this perceived patronising attitude made relations between Przychodnia and Syrena 'really … tense … [I]t was [a] really really bad situation. Right now it's kind of better … they are coming here, doing the solidarity bars, selling alcohol to raise some funds for the squat. Sometimes they come here for the show or something, but this is very rare.' Pawel argued that if Syrena had their way over what should be done with Przychodnia, they would 'want to make another place only for the kids … it doesn't make sense.' Pawel defended Przychodnia's activities in terms of outreach and visibility:

> On Syrena they can make a workshop for the neighbours, and how many people will come? Fifteen? And … y'know, if 200 people come [here] for the concert, and 10% of them take a look at the posters … and take this message, and one of them keeps it in mind, and goes vegetarian and … maybe starts to also build something like this, it's already good.

He also argued that displaying a punk aesthetic was important, because it symbolised a different lifestyle, and undermined the message of mainstream conformity:

> The punk style, it was natural for us. We didn't want to paint the walls white to make people come and think that it's a normal place … Because when the anarchists like try to ban subculture [in] the movement, I think it's a threat that it [will become] like any other movement … That if we, y'know, paint the walls white to make so-called 'normal' people feel comfortable here, and dress normally … then [we] are just like any other people … We can prove with our lives that it's possible to live in a different way.

This clearly resonates with the importance of a 'squatter identity' as expressed by the SHA Collective in London and by Hans Pruijt, discussed above. Rafa agreed that 'this is … [a] very important part of this movement, of punk rock, y'know, this anti-aesthetic stuff.' But Rafa was conscious that the punk aesthetic could alienate 'people from outside': 'Someone who is from the "normal" world [would think] this [place] is like a shit … It's quite difficult for people just not to think about all this mess and just focus [on] what we want to say.' So, even within the punk squat, they were conscious of the issue of 'respectability' and how their aesthetic might be read by others.

This repeatedly expressed notion of certain types of activity as marking out 'proper anarchists' speaks to the dichotomy between 'workerism' and 'lifestylism,' which has already emerged in the discussion of anarchist activisms associated with punk, in the discussion of intersectionality and feminism, and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6. Even though both sets of squatters might be considered as engaging in essentially 'lifestylist' politics (at least as far as their detractors might be concerned), there are clearly divisions at work within this form of activism as well. Of all the interviewees in Poland, Grzegorz's views perhaps came closest to that of the 'workerist' straw figure. As an anarcho-syndicalist, Grzegorz felt that squats were largely irrelevant to anarchist politics. His view was that:

> generally … most tenants don't want to just boycott rent, they want to have flats. Most of them are old people, or single women with little children … they rather don't think about squatting. Squatting is the last thing … they can do. We generally fight for social flats, yeh? … If [the squatters] do some blockade of evictions we [ZSP] go … Sometimes we cooperate, but we have different groups and *different politics*.[59]

This goes some way to explaining Grzegorz's offhand dismissal of squatting, above, but despite his negative view of squatting, Grzegorz had been among those trying to prevent the eviction of Elba squat in 2012 and also helped defend against the attempted eviction of Syrena after it was squatted in 2011: 'I defended squat[s] only twice,' Grzegorz said, 'because … one of the people who lived

[59] [emphasis added]

there was my comrade from anti-fascist actions … Defending squats, I just learned how to fight with police [laughs], nothing more. For me people who live on the squat are tenants, that's it.' So, even as Grzegorz appears to subscribe to the 'workerist' stereotype in his dismissal of squatting, he was still motivated to physically defend squats from eviction out of solidarity for a comrade who was living in one of them, and because of a shared opposition to state repression.

The tensions between Przychodnia and Syrena, though existing *within* one form of activism that might be described (or derided) as 'lifestylist,' point towards a wider dismissal of punk by some anarchists – Grzegorz here included among them. However, the theoretical separation between 'proper anarchism' and 'bourgeois distractions,' so clearly demarcated in online forum communities, becomes much less clearly defined on the ground, where punk is engaged with a diffuse spectrum of anarchist perspectives.

- **The anarchist politics of punk squats in Poland**

Another instance which confounds the supposed dichotomy between 'workerism' and 'lifestylism' is Rozbrat squat in Poznań. Rozbrat is a large compound of warehouses, out-buildings, DIY-built living quarters, and caravans, which began life as opportunist housing for a group of punks in 1994, who later began putting on gigs. Grzegorz Piotrowski writes that 'the punk rock concerts were complemented by more political public events and the squat became the centre of an eruption of social activism.'[60] The space subsequently became the home of *Federacja Anarchistyczna* (Anarchist Federation) in 1997, and eventually became a base for whole plethora of anarchist political and cultural initiatives, including the syndicalist workers' union OZZIP (National Union of Workers Initiative). Rozbrat also houses a bike workshop, martial arts classes and training gym, facilities for car repair, a library, computer and internet facilities, meeting rooms, and more

Fig. 4.10 – Mural at Rozbrat, Poznań.

[60] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 235

besides.[61] It is the longest running squat in Poland, and is widely recognised as an organisational hub for anarchism across the country. Kasia, a resident of Rozbrat, noted the importance of this:

Fig. 4.11 – Bike workshop at Rozbrat.

> This place is really like the best example for [the] whole [of] Poland I guess, and everybody says that … We really help a lot, like we print posters and send them to all [over] Poland and we have our Anarchist Review [journal], and we also send it to all [over] Poland. So we are like this base. And I even remember when one of the guys from the local government, who was really against Rozbrat, he was terrified that Poznań [laughs] is like a Mecca of anarchism. It's really funny, I mean, but yeh, maybe it's actually like that.

Paulina, a squatter at Rozbrat, is an example of this blurring of the 'workerist'/'lifestylist' divide with her involvement in the syndicalist union OZZIP. Paulina viewed that when *Federacja Anarchistyczna* began regular weekly meetings at Rozbrat in 1997, it 'was kind of started in a contrast to the place,' suggesting a consciousness of the potential tensions between a punk squat and organised anarchist political groups. However, since then, Rozbrat's importance as a base for anarchist organising has grown, even while it continues to host punk gigs and other culturally focussed initiatives. Paulina was positive about the mix of activities within the compound:

> It really works, like when we for example do a syndicalist demonstration the people who are organising gigs here, they would come and set-up the microphone and speakers for us, like to provide infrastructure. Or, they would invite us to come before some gig to talk about some action … demonstration, or campaign … So, I think this particular place, it plays a role actually because it is a space for concerts, it's a living space, but it's also a … political place, with a place for meetings … For many years [there] was just this place [in

[61] Piotrowki writes that 'Rozbrat hosts … a bike shop that specialises in single-speed bicycles and whose crew is connected with the Critical Mass group in Poznań. There is a silk-screen print shop, an anarchist library and archive (since 1997), as well as an infoshop. The Food Not Bombs group prepares meals on the squat premises, and the site hosts both a chapter of the Polish Anarchist Federation and of the *Incjatywa Pracownicza* (Workers' Initiative: a radical, syndicalist trade union). There is also a small feminist group and publishing house called Bractwo Trojka … The samba group [called Pękające Bębenki] … has its rehearsals here and there are even yoga classes. In 2001, another room was adapted for the Kulawy Muł [Lame Mule] initiative … which organises recitals, poetry evenings, lectures and discos. The back of Lame Mule is transformed into the Gallery, open for independent artists.' (Ibid. p. 234)

> Poznań] … so everyone came here, people … with different perspectives. And this place actually … made us [come] together. And [when] we look on the other milieus in different Polish cities, it's not so close actually. Like people I work with from the union … they have not much [in] common. If you go to Czestochowa or if you go to Gdańsk, for example … even Wrocław, they are much … more separated than us. I think because [of] this place really, it is [a] meeting point, and it mix[es] everything.

Kasia, whose interests might be described as more 'lifestylist' than Paulina's, echoed this sentiment:

> There are a lot of people who [are] involved in different things, but it's actually all mixed together. Like for example, I'm not really involved in the workers' unions stuff, but if we have [a] demonstration, even in the other city, I'm still going there, because I feel like it's the same struggles anyway. And like I'm an anti-fascist and I'm struggling for animal rights and … for me, it's the same struggle … So I think it's really important to work together.

So Kasia, who describes her own activist focus as anti-fascism and animal rights – identified as predominant punk associated activisms above – views anarcho-syndicalist support for workers as part of 'the same struggle.' Paulina was conscious of the theoretical tension between ostensibly divergent approaches existing side-by-side, but felt that this could be effectively transcended in practice. Piotrowski emphasises the significance of OZZIP's syndicalist organising within Rozbrat squat. He writes that the 'turning point was the connection the squatters established with the workers of the Hipolit Cegielski factory (HCP) … one of the biggest employers in Poznań':[62]

> The cooperation between the squatters and workers meant that the new political agenda was taking root, and it influenced changes in political style. Grassroots work, such as handing out flyers in front of factories, organising meetings, helping the workers with organising strikes, assisting those who were fired from their working places, and providing legal aid became prominent.[63]

So typically anarcho-syndicalist activism was (and is) being organised within the squat, with cooperation between squatters and workers. Echoing Syrena's activist focus, Paulina emphasised the immediate political significance of squatting: 'We regularly support the tenants' struggles, not only in Poznań but also in other cities … The issue of the houses is a political issue, and squatting is, for me, a political issue.' Paulina also recognised squatting as an important end in itself, but considered it vital not to succumb to temptations to retreat into an 'anarchist ghetto':

[62] Ibid. p. 237
[63] Ibid. p. 240

> I think it's very important to not sit in here all day, it's nice, and I mean it's an easy way of living of course, we don't pay rent, and all this … I live here, I don't have to pay rent and I don't have to do wage labour, so I can spend my time on supporting the movement … But we are kind of consciously also trying to somehow also include the squatters' movement, tenants' movement and the workers' movement … we try to put it together on the practical level … But also we try to write and theorise on connections between work, hous[ing] and … alternative culture, or squatting as a means of survival in the capitalist economy.

Fig. 4.12 – Banner at Rozbrat in solidarity with Köpi (Berlin), Ungdomshuset (Copenhagen), Les Tanneries (Dijon), Blitz (Oslo), Yfanet (Thessaloniki).

Squatting, then, provides an effective base for organising, both in terms of resources and space, but also in terms of freeing activists from wage slavery, so enabling them to devote more time and energy to their political activities. Paulina's point about making a conscious effort to bring these various strands together, both in practical and theoretical terms, demonstrates that the broad mix of activities at Rozbrat is not just some accidental arrangement. People at Rozbrat are actively challenging divisions within the anarchist movement, such as those typically stereotyped as 'workerists' and 'lifestylists.' Piotrowski writes that because 'Rozbrat was founded by anarchists, anarchism still dominates the collective and has become more visible and vibrant over time.'[64] Kasia argued that the various initiatives and interests of Rozbrat were held together by this shared anarchist *identity*:

[64] Ibid. p. 234

with every kind of struggle it's the most important to have this political identity, always. I mean you could squat something and you can be … like anti-political and … create a social, or cultural centre, but in the end … if you don't have this political identity then … usually you lose … This is really important that we have that and, yeh, I guess we want to be [an] example … [But] it's very important that you ident[ify] yourself as anarchist.

Fig. 4.13 – Stickers on the fridge in the kitchen at Rozbrat.

Marta, from Syrena in Warsaw, spoke approvingly of Rozbrat's success in mixing different approaches: 'They really managed to connect all the things in one, because this is an example of a squat which is connected to a punk scene, but it's also politically active … And also … it's working nice[ly] because they are quite open for people from outside.' Rafa, from Przychodnia, echoed Marta's admiration for Rozbrat's ability to connect with people from outside of the punk/squatter/anarchist milieu:

With Rozbrat, it's a little bit [of a] different situation, because they are really partners in the city … [with] local organisations and so on. But they're existing for a long time, like eighteen or nineteen years already, right? ... [A]fter maybe fifteen years … people started to think, 'hey, this is OK, I mean they look strange, the place is kind of strange, and trashy and whatever, but they are saying … good things. They want to do something good for … local, people,' or something like that, right? But it took about fifteen, sixteen years for local people to understand that.

This points to the importance of longevity in combination with community engagement, and as Piotrowski notes: '[a]s a result of eighteen [and now twenty] years of continuous activities and actions, Rozbrat is nowadays seen as a counter-example for the neoliberal policies of local

authorities.'[65] In fact, Rozbrat is so much a 'partner in the city' that its location is marked on the tourist information maps distributed by Poznań city council – which is quite incredible for an illegal squat. However, this 'official' recognition belies the reality of the threat of repression, with Rozbrat recently facing eviction by the city council. State repression is a feature of squatting wherever it exists, and Poland is no exception.

- **Repression of squatting in Poland – eviction and legalisation**

Eviction is the most blatant tool of repression against squats, and against the anarchist and punk communities that reside within and utilise them. As Martínez, Piazza and Pruijt write: 'squatters are in principle quite vulnerable because of the strong legal protection of private property and the virtually unlimited repressive powers of the state. Plus, the squatters who actually live in their squats … are sitting ducks for the forces of repression.'[66] As discussed above, squats are an affront to the capitalist principle of private property – even where they are not engaged in political activism, their very existence challenges the norms of ownership. The legal frameworks of capitalist economies are set-up to protect and enforce private property rights – especially so where neo-liberalism has greater influence, as in Poland (or indeed in Indonesia, and increasingly the UK too). Squats across Europe have come under increased pressure from eviction over the last decade or so.[67] As already mentioned, Elba in Warsaw was one victim of this wave of repression. Pawel described the eviction:

> A lot of police came to support this private owner, who came with the security. But the security was not enough, so he called the police. And we are talking [to] the policemen, 'you have no right.' There was a lot of police including the water cannons, and then the firemen to take us out of the roofs.

Pawel was critical of the state's role in what was essentially a private ownership dispute:

> They came just to support something that is private, because it's only a private business of the guy, but still the police came to support him, which was actually illegal … If we have to leave this place the court should decide, not just 'oh, I have a problem, I need a lot of police' [laughs].

[65] Ibid. p. 240
[66] Miguel Martínez, Gianni Piazza and Hans Pruijt, 'Introduction,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 15
[67] Resources like https://en.squat.net/ document the relentless efforts to evict squats across Europe, and resistance to this repression.

Paulina from Rozbrat described another instance of police violence being used to evict squatters:

> The people from the new squat [Odzysk] … they tried to squat another building and there was [an] eviction … and 50 cops with machine guns came and then I was tear gassed. And one of us now is accus[ed] of spitting on the uniform of the cop. And I mean, y'know, bullshit like this. It's not really repression … that's kind of more intimidation or like, y'know, showing there are some limits.

Fig. 4.14 – 'Poznań not developers. Rozbrat, it's not for sale.' Mural at Rozbrat.

This constant threat of repression against squats creates a vigilant security culture within them, as well as diverting considerable time and effort into fortification of the spaces. Marta described some of the effects: 'People are really closed y'know, they don't trust people from outside because they have this police paranoia all the time. It's hard to join any initiative if you don't have friends already there.' But, returning to her criticism of punk squats, she felt that this 'closing off' was 'not fair … I mean come on, things that are happening on the other squat [Przychodnia] are just nothing. Like what? Like a show? What? What the fuck? I mean even if ten policemen would come, what they would see? I just don't get it.' The threat of attacks from fascists further compounds this defensive mindedness and security consciousness, as discussed further above.

The evictions of Elba and the first attempted squat by the Odzysk collective were carried out with the weight of state violence. However, in the case of Elba, this heavy handed response 'was also quite good press for us,' said Pawel, 'because it was [a] very expensive action, y'know, there was 100 policemen or something.' Despite the eviction going ahead, Pawel said that 'it went good, because it [put] … the press also on our side.' The eviction mobilised significant public support for Elba, as Pawel notes: 'many people came to support us … And … we did the big demonstration … like more than 2,000 people there … (for Poland [this] is good) against the eviction.' This had an immediate effect in terms of forcing the city council into negotiations over a new space for the evicted Elba

collective, as will be discussed further below, but also contributed to staving-off subsequent eviction attempts at Syrena and Przychodnia. As Marta put it, the government had 'to be delicate, because they [were] trying to take care about the public relations.' An eviction attempt at Przychodnia was, again, supported by large numbers of police, but Pawel noted that the squatters were able to resist the eviction 'because it was very popular in the press and we had the good press, so the city didn't want to make new riots. So … somehow we kept this place.' There is a dual threat to the city government here, in the form of negative press coverage of its violent eviction tactics, but also the threat of highly disruptive (and expensive) riots breaking out in retaliation for evictions. With similarity to the support shown to Elba, Natalia described the response in Poznań to the threat of eviction against Rozbrat, which in 2009 and 2010 mobilised two:

> big demonstration[s]. A lot of people came … maybe 2,000 … So it was not only us but we have some support from the other cities, I think that some people wanted to help us … They were supporting us all the time. So for us [this] is very important, and we have some … journalists … that are supporting us and … a lot of people involved in culture, and some people involved in politics … and they are supporting us [against] … the evict[ion].

ETC Dee focuses on the 'Robin Hood' aspect of squats as a motivation for public support, writing that 'there is a certain public sympathy for those who squat houses worth millions which are standing derelict. The need to protect private property is coming into conflict with a basic belief which frames emptiness as itself criminal when people have a need for housing.'[68] This certainly plays an important role in the examples discussed above, but far more prominent in their defence strategies is what Pruijt describes as the advancing of 'a functionalist frame, emphasising the valuable role of the project in the community, for example as a breeding place for the creative class.'[69] This was particularly the case with Rozbrat, but its cultural activities were more than the basis of a plea for clemency from the state. Because of its longevity, and its success in attracting people into the squat for various social, cultural, and political functions, there is a pool of supporters, who might ordinarily have little or no involvement with the squat, that can be called on to defend Rozbrat in times of crisis. Artur, another resident of Rozbrat, appreciated the significance of this popular support, but felt that it was fundamentally limited: 'When Rozbrat was in danger of eviction, then suddenly everyone came for a demonstration … That's also our problem, we would rather treat Rozbrat as [an] aim to achieve some goals, and still, a lot of people … tend to treat it as a goal [in] itself.' Adrian

[68] ETC Dee, 'Moving Towards Criminalisation and Then What? Examining dominant discourses on squatting in England,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 253
[69] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 34

was more optimistic about mobilisations to defend squats, considering their inherent opposition to state forces as a good introduction to radical politics:

> They are always good … mobilising centres … Many people know the place because they went to party here or they went to a meeting here, they went to a lecture here, to a workshop, whatever. So when one of those places is threatened … those situations always mobilise loads of people. For example, when Rozbrat in Poznań was threatened, there were two demonstrations both around 2,000 people strong, very militant demonstrations, very strong ones. And if people are smart then they can use this for mobilising people for other events, because that's often the first demo people go to, or [the] first kind of struggle or physical struggle where they get involved. It's also less dangerous than, I dunno, going to beat some Nazis in the streets or get[ting] involved into any other conflict where there is 2,000 people and all of them are ready to fight for the place. It also shows people who are already involved in the movement their strength, their possibility of mobilising many, many people to fight for whatever they see as right.

Fig. 4.15 – Sign at Wagenburg, Wrocław. Addition to the left reads: 'Private area. No trespassing.'

So, as much as squats offer opportunities to expose people to anarchist politics by the fact of their existence, through their cultural roles, and through their political activism, the confrontation generated with the state and with private capital actually creates a further potential point of politicisation. These mobilisations send a clear message to the parties interested in evicting squats, particularly the state, which clearly alters how, or even if, they proceed with eviction attempts. This is then a prime concern for squatters, as demonstrated in the repeatedly expressed concern for 'good press.' But as Adrian notes, there is also a beneficial effect from large mobilisations as politicising encounters, and an expression of support which gives the squatter movement (and anarchist movement more widely) increased confidence.

To avoid the potential repercussions of these confrontations, city councils and local governments often attempt negotiation and accommodation as a tactic to neutralise or contain squats. Legalisation can be viewed as a major success for individual squats, offering some level of security

against eviction, but the compromises made to reach this kind of agreement with the state are viewed by many squatters to be extremely problematic. Mateusz from Odzysk in Poznań discussed some of the compromises they had made in order to extend the longevity of their squat:

> Two weeks ago there were people … from the city administration and they check[ed] the … state of the building, like … is the building OK for making some gigs and so on … [The] bailiff was here too, two times … So yeh let's say in [an] official way … they try to move us. But … fuck it's not tru[ly] … in a legal way because this bailiff … sometimes was trying to … cheat us because he went here [with] some other people, and eventually we discovered … that by the law it cannot be like that, that he came with these people. So it was like quite strange that it wasn't [a] 100% legal form of … checking this building.

Mateusz recognised that co-operating with government officials was a compromise, but reasoned that:

> by the law these people could come with police [and a locksmith], so in this way the police could go inside [and] we don't want them [to], of course. So we decided to go by the law … and to let them [the city officials] in … We are thinking that … behaving in that way we can stay here longer.

As mentioned already, the Warsaw city council had been forced into negotiation with the collective from the evicted Elba squat, in large part because of the mass support the squatters had received. At the time of research these protracted negotiations were still ongoing, but a legal 'autonomous non-profit socio-cultural centre' has since been opened, called ADA Pulawska. This move towards legalisation created another area of tension for the Przychodnia squatters, this time with the Elba collective, because one of the proposed conditions for the opening of the legal social centre was the eviction of Przychodnia. As Rafa put it: 'Elba collective wants [a new] building from [the] municipal[ity], but it means if they sign agreement Przychodnia has to move out. So, [Przychodnia] don't want Elba actually to sign the agreement [laughs].' Pawel described the negotiations with the city council as 'bureaucratic shit' and said that he 'didn't see a point' in running a 'half-legal place.' Pruijt identifies a major issue surrounding squat legalisation as the potential 'loss of the oppositional edge.'[70] He cites a study of squat legalisation in Amsterdam which 'describes the commonly occurring effects … as a loss of links to various societal structures, of ties with other free spaces, and a decline in dynamism and political engagement.'[71] As noted already, squats' illegality imbues them

[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid. citing Pieter Breek and Floris de Graad, *Laast duizend vrijplaatsen bloeien. Onderzoek naar vrijplaatsen in Amsterdam*, (Amsterdam: De Vrije Ruimte, 2001), p. 77

with an intrinsic confrontational value. This is what makes them such politically significant places. A 'half legal squat' might still effectively operate as a space for political organising, but it loses some of its intrinsic political opposition, and as Pruijt notes this can also remove spaces from the networks of support and solidarity that exist around squats. In this sense, legalisation can be understood as a tool of repression, attempting to contain the squat within a legal framework, and cutting off the opportunity for politicising confrontation. Krzysztof, who lives at Wagenburg in Wrocłow, identified this issue in the legal status of CRK (*Centrum Reinimaji Kultury* – Centre for the Resuscitation of Culture):

> CRK is not, like, 100% squat anymore. Because there was [a] time when there was many squats in Wrocław and they tr[ied] to keep some places for a long time [but] they couldn't. And then they had one place [left], and they had [a] strong position, and then [the] city took … back this place, and instead they gave CRK, they exchange[d] place[s]. So CRK was not squatted, they got this place from the city … like many houses in Europe in a similar situation. That's why it's now … legal … it's just [an] 'official alternative culture house' … And it's, like, y'know, CRK is not centre of the anarchism in Wrocław. There is [an] anarchist movement in Wrocław, but it's not CRK.

So in this instance, legalisation meant a loss of connection to the local anarchist movement. During the research, CRK was largely closed for major renovations, being carried out by the city council. Krzysztof was worried about this situation, saying, 'no one is really sure if we['re] gonna get this place back,' and felt that the centralised concentration of the movement's energies into CRK has left them vulnerable:

> The thing is … of course all the squats have some limit time now … [but] if we lost this place then I don't think no one's gonna make [a] new place. Maybe because the place [existed for] too long … and [the] movement [has] concret[ised] somehow, it's like centralised ... They [take] just one direction, like mak[ing] alternative culture, and not so much networking with local people.

So as Pruijt notes, and as may be the case for CRK, legalisation does not necessarily guarantee security or permanence: 'An important factor is the level of control that occupants retain after legalisation. Often legalisation involves a non-profit housing organisation taking control of the building and turning the squatters into individual tenants. In other cases, the ex-squatters remain in control as a collective.'[72] As stated already, the legal system is heavily biased in favour of private property, so an 'official' agreement with squatters can actually provide the state with ammunition, such as written lease agreements, to make a legal case to proceed with eviction. So the binary trade-off between the 'oppositional edge' of illegality and the 'security' of legalisation is often a false one. This was certainly the case in the famous eviction of Ungdomshuset in Copenhagen in 2008,[73] which had originally been gifted to the youth of the city, but had become a target for repression by the city council because of the level of anarchist activity that emanated from there. However, Ungdomshuset's original status as a legal space did not mean that the occupants were minded to comply with the eviction order when it came. As has been the case in numerous other situations across Europe, a formerly legal space became an illegal squat when people organised to resist eviction, generating all the politicising conflict and confrontation of more straightforward squat evictions. The eventual eviction of Ungdomshuset resulted in three days of rioting across Copenhagen – and, as with eviction of Elba in Warsaw, the promise of a new space being opened by the city. So legalisation need not mean meek compliance to the demands of the city government. Rather, it can be used as a pragmatic tactic to create further squatting opportunities and to prolong the life of existing spaces. Negotiation and resistance can go together in reality, even while they are contradictory in theory. As Margit Mayer notes:

Fig. 4.16 – Squat kayak, Wagenburg, Wrocław.

[72] Pruijt, 'Squatting in Europe,' in *Squatting in Europe*, pp. 34-35, citing Breek and de Graad, *Laast duizend vrijplaatsen bloeien*, p. 50

[73] The archive of updates on the eviction as it happened is available here - http://www.emoware.org/ungdomshuset.asp. And articles on the history of the eviction are available here - https://en.squat.net/tag/ungdomshuset/, here - http://libcom.org/library/remember-remember%E2%80%A6-ungdomshuset, and here - http://www.indymedia.ie/article/81281?userlanguage=ga&save_prefs=true [all accessed 31st March 2015]

> Repressive or containment strategies of the state often force the movements to 'choose' either eviction or some form of legalisation. But under specific circumstances, some squatting movements have been able to experiment with double track strategies and been able to go back and forth between (or even apply simultaneously) direct action and negotiation, most often in some kind of division of labour between radical core groups and more moderate supporters, and thereby manage to extend their squats and with them the infrastructures for their collective living, working, and political organising.[74]

So, even while entering into any compromise with the state (even something far short of legalisation) looks like a fatal flaw for the anarchist political grounding of squats, it can in fact be sensibly understood as a tactic of pragmatism. And, as discussed below, 'illegal' squats are inevitably embroiled in legal wrangling in the courts, so are no more able to evade state interference in this regard. With consideration of the wider squatting movement in Warsaw, this 'double track strategy' has been a particular success. Just a few years ago, Elba was the only squat in the city, but with different collectives associated with different buildings employing diverging yet complementary strategies, they now have *three* spaces – the 'illegal' squats Syrena and Przychodnia, and the 'half-legal' ADA Pulawska. Negotiation with the city might not be a purist's idea of anarchist politics, but this combination of mobilising popular support, resistance of evictions, and compromise with the city has resulted in significant practical success. This doesn't prevent the theoretical tensions having a real impact, as was the case between Przychodnia and the Elba collective, but it does emphasise the oft-observed gap between theoretical abstraction and practical application.

So squats in Poland are predominantly associated with punk *and* anarchism, representing a bricks-and-mortar manifestation of that relationship. Again, this is not to say the relationship is straightforward, and examination of squatting in Poland has helped identify some key tensions in the relationship between anarchism and punk.

Social centres, squats and punk in the UK

Squats have also been significant in the context of the UK punk scene, but as state repression of squats has become more ferocious in recent years, legally occupied anarchist social centres have had an increasingly prominent role. As described in the UK case study focus, most gigs still occur in commercial bars and music venues, with all the financial, organisational, and political/ethical difficulties that carries. However, for punk scenes with a strong association with anarchism, squats

[74] Margit Mayer, 'Preface,' in *Squatting in Europe*, p. 3

and anarchist social centres present a far more desirable venue for gigs and other events – and in most big cities across the UK there are squats and social centres organised and run by punks, or frequented by them. Punk in the UK has had a close association with squatting since its inception, with numerous 'early punk' icons such as Joe Strummer or John Lydon living in squats in the late-1970s. In the 1980s too, anarcho-punk bands such as Crass, Conflict and Chumbawamba were all started in squats[75] – indeed, Crass's first gig was a benefit for a squat in London. As Ramsay Kanaan points out: 'squatting existed long before punk came along and so did [the] politics,'[76] but Rich Cross argues that Crass were crucial in 'catalysing the squat rock movement (including arranging the mass Zig-Zag anarcho-festival squat in London in 1982, designed as an "inspiration to other people to open up more places" as venues, homes and action-centres).'[77] So squatting played an important role in the relationship between anarchism and punk from very early on in punk's history. The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids agree, writing that 'the main incubator [for squatting] was anarcho-punk, with its fervent – if ill-defined – hostility to "the system".'[78] However, echoing some of the anti-punk sentinment discussed in the context of Poland, they complain that many punks 'were so permanently wasted and self-destructive as to be a liability … [and] only a few were politically active,' leading them to conclude that in its association with punk, '[w]hile at its broadest, squatting was in many ways at its shallowest.'[79] Despite these concerns, the anarchist politics of squatted social centres provided 'opportunities for political resistance'[80] both in terms of cultural activities (such as gigs) and as spaces for activist organising, in which punks were often involved, as described in Chapter 2.

- **Repression of squatting in the UK**

Squatting has a long history[81] in the UK, but has come under increasing pressure especially from the late-1970s onwards, concurrent with the neo-liberalisation of the UK economy. The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids in Brighton write that '[f]rom the 1990s onwards, the average

[75] In fact, technically speaking, Crass's Dial House in Epping forest, Essex, was not squatted, but was an 'open house' which operated akin to a commune.
[76] Interviewed in Joe Biel, *Beyond the Music: How punks are saving the world with DIY ethics, skills, & values*, (Portland, Oregon: Cantankerous Titles, 2012), p. 75
[77] Cross, '"There Is No Authority But Yourself",' p. 2
[78] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 158
[79] Ibid.
[80] Dunn, 'Anarcho-punk and resistance in everyday life,' p. 201
[81] See especially Colin Ward, *Cotters and Squatters. Housing's Hidden History*, (Nottingham: Five Leaves, 2009 [2002])

lifespan of a squat has been six weeks. Some last a few days. The tide has turned.'[82] And that '[c]urrently [2012], although squats exist everywhere, the only remaining places in England with identifiable squatter communities are Brighton, London, and Bristol.'[83] As Colin Ward puts it: 'central government politicians of both major parties in Britain have been unremittingly hostile,' and in an effort to repress squatting its legal status was changed from civil trespass to criminal offence in 'the Criminal Law Act of 1977 … [and] Criminal Justice Act of 1994.'[84] Ward points to the state's espoused justification for repression of squatting:

> In preparation for [the Criminal Justice] Act, the Home Office issued a Consultation Paper in which it stated that it 'does not accept the claim that squatting results from social deprivation. Squatters are generally there by their own choice, moved by no more than self-gratification or an unreadiness to respect other people's rights.'[85]

The political motivation is clear, but Ward argues these acts both 'failed to deter the country's 50,000 or so squatters.'[86] However, the election of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat government in 2010 sparked a new raft of repressive, and this time more effective, legislation against squatting. As the Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids write: '[u]nfortunately, instead of criminalising emptiness, the government now seems intent on criminalising one solution to emptiness.'[87] Mike Weatherley, former Tory MP for Hove and a prominent cheerleader for the recent legislation to repress squatting, echoed the political motivation of the 1993 Home Office Consultation on squatting, declaring in Parliament in 2011: 'Fact: squatters cause damage, are frequently anti-social, delay buildings being developed and avoid the daily expenses we all have to pay. *They are usually political motivated and anti-establishment*.'[88]

Legislating 'by the backdoor,' Kenneth Clarke MP tabled an amendment to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPOA) to tackle squatting. Lucy Finchett-Maddock writes that as a result: 'anyone found squatting in a residential building [will] face a year in jail, a £5,000 fine, or both.'[89] Despite '96 percent of those who responded to the consultation process … stat[ing]

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[82] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 174
[83] Ibid. p. 154. Finchett-Maddock quotes the Advisory Service for Squatters 'modest estimate' of 'now roughly 22,000 people living in squats' in the mid-2000s. (Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 216)
[84] Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, p. 161
[85] Ibid. pp. 161-162, citing: Home Office, *Consultation Paper on Squatting*, (London: Home Office, 1993), Para. 62
[86] Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, p. 161
[87] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 170
[88] Ibid. [emphasis added]
[89] Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 224

they did not wish to see any changes in the laws regarding squatting,'[90] the amendment was passed 'by 283 votes to 13, a majority of 270.'[91] Weatherley celebrated by 'stating on his website, "To all the squatters out there: get out and stay out."'[92]

The SHA Collective write that this legislation has been effective in repressing the squatters' movement:

> squatting has been increasingly forced into the temporary. Court papers are served quicker and quicker, evictions become fortnightly rituals, and the looming ban on commercial squatting places squatters before an ever shortening horizon.
>
> The 2012 ban on residential squatting, a Left dead-set on passive resistance and a depoliticised squatting movement has left squatters with increasingly fewer lines of defence and political creation.[93]

Andy, from the Legal Defence and Monitoring Group, appeared on the London Action Resource Group's *Dissident Island Radio* programme of 2nd October 2015 to share legal advice for squatters and occupiers. He noted that in the last week of September 2015, the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) meeting counted 34 arrests in one week in repression against squatting, including those squatting in commercial properties (which is not covered by Section 144 of LAPSOA, and retains the 'squatters' rights' of the old Section 6 of the Criminal Law Act 1977[94]). As indication of the severity of the repression, Andy noted that seven people had been arrested for burglary, which, according to Andy, 'is extremely unusual in the squatting world,' and four of those arrested for burglary have been charged and will face Crown Court prosecution, which carries a high-risk of imprisonment. Andy said, 'they would like to do all squatters for … burglary'[95] because of the harsher punishment involved. Andy noted the repression of a squat in Liverpool in particular:

> Four people [were] jailed for ten weeks for simply squatting a building when there was an interim possession order … which means that if you are still on those premises after that has been correctly served on you, you are committing a criminal offence rather than a civil

[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 175
[93] SHA Collective communiqué, *Against Apolitical Squatting*
[94] 'Section 6 legal notice for squats,' (13th October 2006): https://libcom.org/organise/section-6-legal-notice-for-squats [accessed 27th November 2015]
[95] Dissident Island Radio, episode 162, (2nd October 2015): http://www.dissidentisland.org/show/dissident-island-radio-02-oct-2015-episode-162/ [accessed 27th November 2015]

> trespass … It was a social centre more than a squat, and because a lot of people were using it, *the police were really under pressure from the council to shut it down*.[96]

The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids also note the explicitly political nature of the repression of squatting. They write that:

> three squats in Hove were raided by London's Metropolitan Police before the Royal Wedding in April 2011; despite seven arrests there were no charges, but all the squats were illegally evicted … The government wants to crush this resurgent force as part of repressive drive against so-called domestic extremists.[97]

Finchett-Maddox agrees, writing:

> the illegalisation of squatting came as a clear legal reaction during times of repression by those in the seat of authority. It highlights the primeval role of the occupation of space and the constant conflict between the right to protest, to have a home, to occupy public space, as opposed to the rights of those who are the proprietors of the estates involved. The force of private property prevailed, as it often does.[98]

So, squatting in the UK has been (and is being) repressed in explicitly political terms, in recognition of squatting's flagrant disregard for the concept of private property, and of the key role that squatted spaces perform for a wide range of activist movements. This level of repression, especially in the wake of the 2012 anti-squatting legislation, appears to be significantly harsher and much more disruptive than the repression reported in the context of Poland.

- **Legally rented anarchist social centres in the UK**

Some squats continue to operate, but there are certainly fewer of them, and those that do remain are reticent to draw the attention of the authorities to themselves – the Red and Black Umbrella in Cardiff, for example, recently changed tack from a social centre to a residential squat. As a result, those social centres which are not squats have increased in importance for anarchist punk scenes. Some contemporary anarchist social centres with strong punk connections include the Warzone Centre in Belfast, the 1in12 Club in Bradford, Kebele in Bristol (which actually began as a squat), Wharf Chambers in Leeds, the Cowley Club in Brighton, and the Sumac Centre in Nottingham. Also

[96] Dissident Island, 162
[97] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 176
[98] Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 226

mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, T-Chances is a community centre/music venue which frequently hosts punk gigs. Interviewee Liz discussed the importance of such venues from her perspective of playing in a band:

> We've been lucky enough … to be asked to play a number of gigs either in venues that display their political allegiances more obviously; overtly anarchist community centres such as the Cowley Club in Brighton, or less overtly Wharf Chambers in Leeds, and more and more gigs organised by anarchist punks where the politics is part of the whole thing. Both the Cowley and Wharf Chambers have been some of my favourite spaces in which to play/be (I've also attended gigs as a punter at both), the sense of community/inclusivity and safety in those places are wonderful and deliberate, and this definitely stems from their 'anarchish' principles, along with the queer feminist politics of the organisers.

So, anarchist politics and anarchist organising are crucial to non-squat social centres too, even while they lack the inherent opposition to private property/capitalism described above in the context of squats in Poland. As interviewee Jack put it:

> I do absolutely … think that physical places are of enormous importance … And I think one of the tragedies of the anarchist movement generally, y'know, the whole kind of counter culture movement … is that we haven't done enough in terms of actually establishing counter institutions that are bricks and mortar.

The legal status of these social centres, and the compromises to state and capital entailed within that, creates its own tensions and difficulties. The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids discuss the opening of the Cowley Club in 2003, but note the irony of it being named after 'squatting pioneer Harry Cowley'[99] because it is a legally rented space. They write that '[a]round this time, similar projects linked through the UK Social Centre Network opened in other towns,'[100] including some of those listed above, in addition to the London Action Resource Centre and the Common Place in Leeds. The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids describe the Cowley as legal yet 'oppositional,' framing disagreements over the approach there as 'ideological opposing the pragmatic.'[101] They write that 'the usefulness of having a stable place from which to organise is clear and many groups use the Cowley Club to meet and fundraise,' but echoing the tensions described in the context of Poland, they argue that 'the Cowley has become in some ways an anarchist ghetto, centralising

[99] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 167
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid. p. 168

everything in one space … and activists have their time taken up with management issues … The question of ghettoisation is a thorny one.[102]

The Warzone Collective in Belfast have been involved in running anarchist punk social centres for more than 30 years, which, like the Cowley Club, have been legally rented. A brief examination of their activities will serve to further open-up some of the issues around cooperation with state authorities, and paying rent to private commercial landlords.

- *The Warzone Centre, Belfast*[103]

The Warzone Collective in Belfast opened its first social centre, named Giros,[104] in Belfast in 1986. This existed, in two different locations (moving to a larger building in 1991), until 2003 when Giros closed its doors, largely because of a lack of volunteers to keep the place running. After a period of nearly eight years with no anarchist social centre in the city, a new building was opened in 2011, now called simply 'The Centre,' which after an early change of venue, is still in operation today.

The original social centre grew out of an initiative organised by the Just Books anarchist bookshop in Belfast called 'the A-Centre' (or 'Anarchy Centre'), which hosted gigs by anarcho-punk bands. Ryan, who has been involved with the Warzone Collective since its inception, recounted the inspiring effect of the A-Centre gigs:

> So, the punks were exposed to anarchism proper, if you like [through Just Books, particularly the café] … The punks kind of were attracted to this kind of thing, and then Just Books collective brought the Poison Girls and then Crass over to play in Belfast, at the Belfast Anarchy Centre which they'd set up. And that kind of exposure really kind of brought the anarchist punk dimension to Belfast. There was a few people who were into it, y'know, I was into [it] back then. But a few people really got it, and between that and then what was going on in Just Books, [which] was [a] kinda focal spot, and that kind of put the seeds of Warzone Collective into things, if you like.

[102] Ibid.
[103] See the documentary *Giro's* by Northern Visions TV, (2010). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7R_tJpihHs [accessed 27th November 2015]
[104] Named after the 'giro cheques' which used to be issued by the state to people claiming social security benefits.

Some of the punks, who had been hanging out at the Just Books shop, started making use of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre for practices, and subsequently gigs. This was necessary because other venues were dubious about holding punk gigs. As Ryan recalls:

> punk bands would … find a bar where they would be allowed to play a few gigs and then for one reason or another people would always say 'right, no more punk gigs' … [I]t was almost never because of violence at them, 'cause there very rarely was … They just didn't like the cut, the look of people, y'know?

The Warzone Collective were inspired by anarchist principles, but the backdrop of (near-)civil war in Belfast in the early-1980s gave a unique slant to the political emphases of the Collective. As Adam said, 'Belfast in those days was *political*.' Crucially, and exceptionally at that time, sectarianism was explicitly rejected by the Warzone Collective and actively discouraged inside Giros. Adam continued:

> nobody care[d] if you [were] a prod[105] or a taig,[106] or, there was definitely [an] anti-racist, anti-sectarian element to it. Which is something that really can't be underestimated, particularly in Belfast in those days and the years previous to it … It's nothing short of amazing really.

Ryan agreed, arguing that punk, in combination with 'anarchist ideas,' was 'cutting across the [sectarian] divide.' Anarchism informed (and informs) Warzone's ethos. Ryan said:

> the whole premise of it was anarchistic, but in the 'anarchist without adjective' type of situation … a generally libertarian stance y'know… nobody was couched down in being an anarcho-syndicalist or y'know, or any other particular strain of anarchism … The key thing to it was DIY, and non-hierarchical, and member driven, where everybody could get involved if they wanted to get involved.

Ryan's identification of an 'anarchism without adjectives' is interesting, echoing the wide ranging spectrum of activisms associated with punk, discussed further above, especially as manifested in Rozbrat squat in Poland. Ryan explained how the organising principles operated in practice:

> So for example … there was regular meetings … and any decision that involved the Centre or what we did next happened at those meetings, but they were open to anybody, so anybody could come down. Which became problematic at some times, because somebody who had never been to a meeting before would come down and go, 'oh I

[105] Slang term for Protestant, indicating a person from a loyalist or unionist background.
[106] Slang term for Catholic, indicating a person from a nationalist or republican background.

> object,' and you'd go 'well, who the fuck are you?' Y'know 'I haven't seen you before.' I mean there was a huge argument over whether we should get a phone, and two people left because we got a phone, so [there was] some really silly stuff that went on.

Ryan viewed that while some disagreements were based on personality clashes, others were rooted in people's divergent views on what anarchist organising actually entailed. He said:

> in some cases people had good reasons to argue, and in other cases it seemed, to me anyway, that they didn't. And they obviously hadn't seen the bigger picture, had no idea what anarchism was about, y'know. It was this kind of concept where anarchism meant free-for-all. Y'know. Free-for-all as long as you don't impinge on anybody else. That last bit always got left out, y'know … [E]verything was agreed by consensus, and, in fact I don't remember us voting on anything. And in the end … if somebody didn't want to go with something, they walked out, and that was [that], you didn't see them at meetings anymore, y'know. And then the old classic phrase 'call yourself anarchists!' y'know.

So, despite anarchism being a prominent organising principle for the Warzone Collective, no common definition of anarchism was agreed upon by those involved. The distinction between 'proper' anarchists, who 'had seen the bigger picture,' and those with half-baked conceptions of anarchism echoes the tensions described between the neighbouring squats in Warsaw. But here, the tension is observed *within one particular group*, rather than between 'rival' groups, or between different activisms. This serves to seriously undermine any assertion of a simple dichotomy of opposing binary factions in anarchism, such as the purported 'lifestylist' versus 'workerist' tension, and emphasises the antinomous spectrum of perspectives within the anarchist movement.

As mentioned above, the first continuous social centre organised by the Warzone Collective, Giros, closed in 2003. The efforts to re-establish the centre several years later raised further tensions, especially between older members of the previous Collective and new/prospective members. Liam had started going to gigs and events at the old Giros in the few years before its closure, and described it as an important factor in his politicisation towards anarchism. After leaving Belfast, Liam ended-up squatting in Barcelona and other European cities for several years. He returned to Belfast and became part of the Warzone Collective's efforts to open a new social centre. Liam said that compared to the process of organising gigs in commercial venues, the new Warzone Centre made it:

> so much easier for me now. Because the main hassle I guess, when I started putting on gigs, was finding a venue who'd actually do it. Most venues wouldn't give a you a

> weekend night, which is fairly useful if you're tryin' to organise like a bigger gig … The process now is a lot simpler.

So, as much as DIY gig production is simpler and more expedient in general, having your own anarchist punk social centre makes the process even simpler, and even more DIY. The requirement to pay for room hire and bouncers is eschewed, and people attending punk gigs no longer have to face harassment and intimidation from bouncers.

In addition to running affordable gigs and cultural events, free from bouncer harassment, the Warzone Centre also provides space for activist organising. Echoing Jack's comments above, Liam said:

> with Warzone … [it's] providing social space … which is important to facilitate the activism … [F]or me space has always been a huge issue that … you only realise it if it gets taken away from you, and … you've nowhere to meet. You can't meet in a bar, you know like, we need our own space, so I think that's important.

In common with Rozbrat in Poznań, though on a smaller scale, The Warzone Centre hosts a wide range of anarchist initiatives. These include: gigs and other punk oriented social events; a vegan café (which was, for many many years, the only vegetarian or vegan place to eat in all of Belfast); meetings of a Plant Based Living Group; meetings of Solidarity Federation (an anarcho-syndicalist group) as well as their weekly drop-in centre for workers; the sale stock and library of the Just Books collective is stored there; the Belfast Anarchist Bookfair in 2012 was held there, as well as the socials following the 2013, 2014, and 2015 bookfairs. So, like Rozbrat, the Warzone Centre provides space for activisms across the anarchist political spectrum, including stereotypically defined 'lifestylist' and 'workerist' initiatives – though the Warzone Collective itself remains closely associated with punk.

- **Social centres and compromise/cooperation with the state in the UK**

As discussed above, repression of squats, and the defensive measures taken against repression can create insularity and a 'ghetto-mentality.' However, despite the entirely legal nature of the Warzone Centre, some older Collective members were reticent to embrace inclusivity while working to establish the new centre. Adam recalled a public meeting to discuss the possible arrangements for the new Centre – a meeting which was only called after the Warzone Collective had already been meeting *in secret* for a long period:

> There were loads and loads of people at this meeting … [It] went really well, but at the end of it there was a certain amount of paranoia from one or two of the older Giros people about 'ah, who the fuck are all these people, what's gonna happen?' Y'know? There was a standoffishness about how open they made it, and I really think that at the start it should've been more open.

Of course, despite the new Warzone Centre not being a squat, that does not reprieve them from difficulties with authorities such as the police, local council, and competing commercial venues. To be generous to the older Warzone Collective members, their refusal to include new people may have stemmed from legitimate concerns about wishing to work towards the establishment of a new centre without harassment from the authorities – rather than the 'paranoia' Adam describes. In any case, by choosing to establish a legal space, the Warzone Collective have inevitably had to deal with, and make compromises with, the local authorities. Liam describes Warzone's relationship with these parties thusly:

> As far as compromises [go], we've had like a lot of conflict with these sort of authoritarian forces … such as the cops are one thing. They're easy. The council are another, they're a bit more difficult. Fortunately the worst group we've had to deal with are the Pubs of Ulster … and the Vintners Association, who are a lobbying group … made up of a lot of rich landlords and bar-owners, with their own interests … [T]hey really didn't like the idea of us opening in the city centre … it's obviously a very unpopular idea of kind of going 'fuck buying drink in bar, like come to our fuckin' venue and drink whatever you want, and just take out the middle man' … [A]s far as like compromises, we haven't made a huge amount. We've had to allow the council in twice to do an inspection, uninvited. So where they've turned up at an event we're running unannounced, or unscheduled, and then they announce themselves and then we have to take them through all the procedures we have in place, such as your fire safety and your staff, y'know, the usual sort of venue stuff. Both of those we just flew through 'cause we were pretty well prepared. The cops have been round a couple of times. The second time they were threatened with legal action and they fucked off. We've never legally allowed them in the building.

So, by maintaining a legal space, the Warzone Collective are actually able to take a strong stand against police harassment. But inspection by the local council means enforcing a certain number of regulations on attendees, which is sometime met with objection, especially since these regulations are being enforced by an espousedly anarchist organisation. The 'classic line' that Ryan mentioned above, 'call yourselves anarchists!' is typically deployed by disgruntled attendees who are asked to

be quiet in the outside areas, refrain from bringing glass bottles into the venue, or not to smoke inside, for example. But as Ryan reasons: 'it wasn't that you were making rules, you were trying to protect yourself, y'know, because the authorities would love to close you down. So by and large you had to kind of negotiate to an extent.' However, as described above, squats – despite avoiding inspections from local councils etc. – also enforce 'rules' on people using their space, and for the most part, the key 'rules' that are enforced are similar whether the space is an illegal squat or a legal social centre, focussing on sexism, racism, homophobia and so on.

There is a clear perception that legally rented social centres are somehow 'less anarchist' than squatted spaces – Hans Pruijt argues that legalisation means less ability to engage in radical politics and isolation from squatter networks, and the Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids point especially to the irony of naming a legally rented space after a squatter icon. Many of the functions of legally rented social centres are actually very similar to those of squatted spaces in terms of the types of events held and the behavioural norms that are enforced within their walls. A criticism levelled against legal spaces is that they are cooperating with state institutions which they profess to oppose, and it is undoubtedly the case that legal social centres do engage in a certain amount of 'hoop jumping' to keep the local authorities off their backs. However, it was notable that the Warzone Centre's legal status in fact enabled them to take a fairly strong line against the police, while having to comply with the health and safety inspectors. But squats' 'illegal' (or less legal) status does not mean freedom from state interference either. Squatters are hugely preoccupied with court cases and legal appeals, and often display an impressive knowledge of the law and machinations of the judiciary. As Wates and Wolmar note: 'The adroit use of the law by squatters has frequently delayed evictions and provided time for organisation and negotiation.'[107] Piotrowski notes that '[b]ecause of the anarchists' critical attitude towards cooperation with the authorities and legal forms of protests' (and not *despite* this attitude), 'they were subsequently involved in one court case after another.'[108] Maintaining an illegally occupied squat does not result in any kind of 'pure' anarchist ideal of removal from state interference. Even while squatters are fighting against eviction, and are clearly oppositional in this regard, in terms of court cases and legal appeals they are working within the state's judiciary and legal framework. This form of cooperation with the state is not, on the face of it, markedly 'more anarchist' than the legal social centres' compliance with government inspectors. As Finchett-Maddock notes, contrary to Pruijt's assertions: 'whether or not squatting is legal or illegal, space will still be produced and reused by those who squat … In England, Wales, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, squatting still takes place, despite the fact that the laws

[107] Nick Wates and Christian Wolmar (eds.), *Squatting: The Real Story*, (London: Bay Leaf Books, 1980), p. 162, quoted in Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 229
[108] Piotrowski, 'Squatting in the East,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 237

have criminalised the movement.'[109] So the 'legal' status of an anarchist social centre is not actually *that* significant, as long as the legal centres are able to maintain a strong sense of opposition – which in terms of acting as bases for activist organising they seem to do successfully. And in the course of repression against anarchist social centres, they may end up becoming illegal squats anyway, as in the case of Ungdomshuset.

While their freedom from state interference might only be distinguished by degree (if at all), the economic imperatives of squats and legal social centres differs much more clearly. Squats do not pay rent, while legal social centres are obliged to raise funds to hand over to a landlord, and must pay utility bills as well (though squats often do this too). These funds might be raised from commercial activity (such as selling food or alcohol), donations from charitable bodies or even the state itself (through Arts Council funding for example), or by operating as a 'members' club.' The Warzone Centre, for example, does all three of these: they charge admission to gigs and other events in the space (often as much as £10, with the caveat that attendees can bring their own alcohol); they operate an overarching charitable organisation called 'Belfast Youth and Community Group' which exempts them from paying rates on their building (though they are largely independent from outside funding); they have a membership scheme, which costs £10 per year and gives members discount on admission prices at events. Most of this money goes towards paying rent to a commercial landlord. Squats, of course, are able to evade this dynamic of capitalist private property relations.

The Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids ask 'whether legal spaces, as opposed to squatted ones, mark … a retreat from the anti-capitalist struggle or a tactical advance.'[110] The 'advance' might be recognised in terms of permanence and stability as an organising base, though issues of centralisation and ghettoisation are also at play here. The 'retreat' is actually less in terms of cooperation with the state in 'legal' terms than in the handing over of large sums of money to commercial landlords and the recreation of the capitalist ethic of private property – even while the ethos and activity inside the space is avowedly anti-capitalist and anarchist. So in the description of spaces as being 'more anarchist' or 'less anarchist,' squats and legal social centres' underlying economic functions have the most significant impact. But the distinction of 'how anarchist' spaces are totally ignores the local context of repression against squatting, or even its feasibility in the first instance – and it is here that the state makes its impact felt. As stated above, legal social centres are increasing in importance because squatting is becoming less and less of an option. In practical terms, a theoretically 'pure' anarchist squat is likely impossible to establish or maintain, rendering

[109] Finchett-Maddock, 'Squatting in London,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 229
[110] Needle Collective and Bash Street Kids, 'Ebb and Flow,' in *The City Is Ours*, p. 167

obsolete the 'ideological ranking' of spaces as 'more anarchist' or 'less anarchist.' The crucial aspect for both squats and legal social centres is how they are used. And whether these spaces are legal or not, anarchism and punk are usually closely associated with them.

Infoshops, distros and punk in Indonesia

In contrast to Poland and the UK, Indonesia's punk scene has not had a strong historical connection with squatting, and nor does it now. One interviewee, Arief, did mention that the archipelago-wide anti-fascist network JAFNUS, which counted many punks among its members, engaged in some squatting alongside their other activities in the late-1990s. While Zaqi described squatting as 'very difficult' in Indonesia, he did describe a collective house in Jogjakarta as looking 'like a squat,' and the Pirata House in Bandung is very much inspired by the aesthetic and organisation of European squats as well. Two bands from the Pyrate Punx Collective, Krass Kepala and KontraSosial, have toured in Europe. As Zaqi put it, these bands were then motivated to '*bring back* like a ... collective, for Pirata House.'[111] Eight people, men and women, live in Pirata House, sharing rent, utilities, food and other expenses. Zaqi said living collectively in a 'punk house' was necessary 'because I am poor.' While the threat of harsh repression makes squatting unfeasible in Bandung, the collective house they inhabit operates very much along the same anarchist, collective, direct democratic lines as typical European squats, and they even have posters from German squats, such as Köpi in Berlin, on the walls of their own Pirata House. InstitutA in Depok also operates as a collective house, though the emphasis of their space is its role as an infoshop. Though these are legally rented buildings, Pirata House and InstitutA both resemble squats in terms of their aesthetic and collective living arrangements – and a house shared by unrelated men and women is already a radical statement in the Indonesian context. However, houses like this are not common,[112] and neither Pirata House nor

Fig. 4.17 – Poster of Köpi (Berlin) on the walls of Pirata House, Bandung.

[111] [emphasis added]

[112] The Taring Babi collective house in Depok, run by the band Marjinal, is another example. See: Jeremy Wallach, 'Indieglobalization and the Triumph of Punk in Indonesia,' in *Sounds and the City: Popular Music, Place and Globalization*, Breet Lashua, Karl Spracklen and Stephen Vagg (eds.), (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 148-161; Helmi Haska, 'Marginal and tattooed,' *Inside Indonesia*, no. 93, (2008), http://www.insideindonesia.org/marginal-and-tattooed [accessed 28th November 2015]; Frreeyya, 'Post A: Marjinal – Indonesia's Punk Activists,' *Indonesia Global Design Studio*, (29th April 2015),

InstitutA are able to hold gigs on their premises – the spaces are located in closely-packed residential areas, and anyway are simply too small. So, Indonesian punk cannot rely on squats or anarchist social centres for gig space or activist organising facilities because they simply do not exist in a form comparable with Poland or the UK.

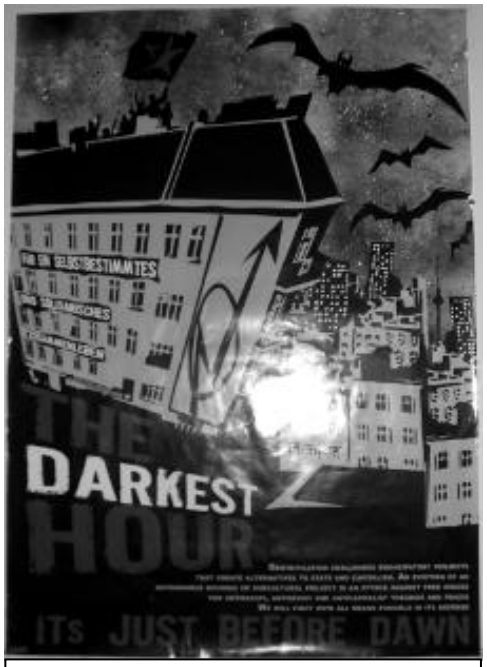

Fig. 4.18 – Another European squat poster at Pirata House, Bandung.

- **Hangouts and distros in Indonesia**

In terms of 'hanging out' and socialising, many punks in Indonesia simply congregate on street corners or specific areas such as the famous 'PI' hangout in Bandung. Putri said, 'PI is … a street in front of a hotel and we hang out there and people try and sleep there. People from the hotel cannot really tell us to go away 'cause we've been hanging out there for, what now, like more than ten years.' Taufan described the PI hangout as a variation on a 'Reclaim the Streets' action.[113] Sean Martin-Iverson notes that the 'Kolektif Balai Kota (BalKot), a DIY hardcore organising collective … gather weekly on the steps of Bandung's City Hall … the group sometimes adopts the name "Reclaim the Stairs" as a reference to the Reclaim the Streets movement – there is a self-consciousness to their appropriation of government space.'[114] In Banda Aceh the punks congregated on the grounds of the Tsunami Memorial museum. In Medan, Felix described how an informal hangout developed into a 'distro' space called Ammunition:

> Friends [were] hang[ing] out over there … we get the same interest [in] underground music … we love hardcore punk, something like that. Punk, hardcore punk. Finally, together, there's a lot of kids that come … and hangout over there too, we hangout everyday … so the feeling it's grown y'know, such a bond … And then, we actually [had] the band for a couple of years when we made that distro in 2007.
>
> We made … clothing lines, like we made our own t-shirts, our own design … started with friends. And then we [got] some cheap place to get rent, some garage in a house, and we just made it become a store. We put a display on it, we put a door and then, yeh!

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https://indonesiadesignstudio.wordpress.com/2015/04/29/post-a-marjinal-indonesian-punk-activism/ [accessed 28th November 2015]

[113] Interview conducted 27/09/2012

[114] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 8

Fig. 4.19 – Mural at Ammunition distro, Medan.

Felix suggested that producing clothes, or indeed entire clothing lines, was easy in Indonesia because of low taxes and because Indonesian clothes manufacturing 'is cheap, and good too … It's easy to make a t-shirt in here, in our country. Even … some big brand names in other countries get the fabric in here.' Distros are extremely common in Indonesia, and play a crucial role in the punk scenes there, functioning as hangout spaces, information points, distributors of all sorts of punk merchandise, and also sponsoring punk gigs. Journalists Willi and Joliat describe the distro run by Kunx of Bandung Pyrate Punx: 'T-shirts, bags and other accessories by local bands can be found, and information about upcoming shows is passed around … [Kunx] also sells CDs, LPs and tapes from all over the world.'[115] Gilang, who was involved in producing the *Submissive Riot* zine and was active in the movement against the Suharto dictatorship with FAF [*Front Anti-Fasis* or Anti-Fascist Front], discussed establishing a distro as part of their activism: 'In '96/'97 we created "Riotic" … as a distro … We tried to make something collective, for gigs or something related with it.' Martin-Iverson describes another early distro in Bandung, called Harder, as an 'activist centre.'[116] So, in the case of Riotic and Harder at least, distros also have some overlap with radical and anarchist activism. However, Martin-Iverson's ethnography of the mid-2000s Bandung punk scene argues that distros are not necessarily bastions of radical politics, and that the DIY ethos can be reinterpreted in a neo-liberal capitalist framework as profiteering entrepreneurship. He notes that as well as the 'shophouse' situation of distros such as Ammunition in Medan, or Kunx's distro in Bandung, many distros are also to be found in 'commercial districts and shopping malls,' and that projects initially

[115] Willi and Joliat, *Poison Island*, n.p.
[116] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 390

driven 'by a desire for self-expression, to make a contribution to the scene or to earn some independent income' can be subsumed under the 'expansion, consolidation and accumulation at play in the developing Indonesian distro industry.'[117] Ian Wilson notes that this was especially evident in the early-2000s: 'previously non-profit Distro trading posts became lucrative businesses, and punk started to attract more youth interested in its superficial aspects or as a pretext for violence rather than ideals of DIY praxis.'[118] Martin-Iverson describes this as 'the gentrification of punk spaces':[119]

> Underground enterprises may start off being driven by personal taste, self-expression and community solidarity, but they routinely become entangled in the logic of neoliberal capitalism, structured by the drive for capital accumulation. In some ways they are examples of the neoliberal ideal: small cultural enterprises driven by youthful innovation, competition and private entrepreneurialism.[120]

Fig. 4.20 – Ammunition distro, Medan.

However, while Martin-Iverson argues that '[a] neoliberal economic logic has thus become ascendant within the Indonesian underground' he also asserts that 'this cannot entirely contain the underground struggle for autonomy.'[121] Wilson, likewise, writes that 'with every move towards punk's co-optation, a counter-movement focused upon keeping punk "true" to its antiauthoritarian and anti-commercial roots continued.'[122] Willi and Joliat state simply: '[t]he DIY collectives' shops are *not* temples of consumerism.'[123] Martin-Iverson concludes that punk distros 'can be considered an expression of youthful creativity and "DIY" autonomy,'[124] functioning as a 'collective and non-commercial … network of largely unpaid support, publicity and creativity, as well as providing a shared identity and a key market for underground commodities.'[125] So the politics of 'punk space' in Indonesia reflect some of the same tensions as in the UK and Poland, even while the form of these

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ian Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk: A Brief Snapshot,' *Le Banian*, no. 15, (June 2013), p. 3: http://www.academia.edu/3359356/Indonesian_Punk_A_Snapshot [accessed 2nd November 2015]
[119] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 9
[120] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 393
[121] Ibid.
[122] Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk,' p. 3
[123] Willi and Joliat, *Poison Island*, n.p. [emphasis added]
[124] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 9
[125] Martin-Iverson, 'Autonomous Youth?' p. 393

spaces is quite distinct from the squats and anarchist social centres of the other two case study contexts.

Case Study Focus B: Conclusion

Distros in Indonesia fulfil some of the roles of squats in Poland and social centres in the UK, but while distros often sponsor punk gigs, they do not provide the actual space in which gigs are held. The tensions between 'more anarchist' and 'less anarchist' spaces is reflected in the case of Indonesian punk distros, with some viewed as 'staying true' to the DIY ethos, and others transgressing against DIY's anti-commercial, anti-capitalist underpinning. This tension also expands out across the three case studies, highlighting the different levels of autonomy these 'punk spaces' can achieve for themselves in their local contexts: the anarchist squats of Poland embody intrinsic opposition to the state, capital, and private property, though are somewhat tied-up in legal wrangling with the state; the legal anarchist social centres of the UK maintain an oppositional stance, but make some concessions to local councils and pay rent to private landlords; the punk distros in Indonesia function as more-or-less commercial shops, and other locations must be sought in which to hold gigs, which are often commercial bars (or even local army bases which will be discussed further in the next case study focus (Chapter 5)). In economic terms, this suggests a sliding comparative scale of commercial/capitalist entanglement, from Indonesian distro shops, via rent paying social centres in the UK, to Polish squats – though all three perceive themselves as being oppositional to the state *and capitalism* and provide space and support for DIY punk and anarchist activist organising. This is not to say, however, that these manifestations of 'punk space' can be ranked by the same criteria as 'less anarchist' or 'more anarchist.' The squatted social centres observed in Poland used to be widespread in the UK also, but are being squeezed-out with increasingly repressive legislation, while squatting opportunities in Indonesia have been, and remain, non-existent. Space is a contested and contentious aspect of all three case studies, but the necessity of manifesting 'punk spaces' in ways which can survive the local conditions, and the compromises that entails, renders straightforward comparison obsolete. The key issues, in terms of the relationship between anarchism and punk, are: the degree of autonomy these spaces can wrest for themselves, *relative to the feasible opportunities* that they are faced with locally; and whether these spaces provide resources for activism, education, politicisation, networking etc. In the UK, in Poland, and in Indonesia, it is clear that 'punk spaces,' whether squats, legal social centres, or distros, *do* engender more autonomy than the mainstream societies of their local contexts. And despite variation *within* the case study contexts, the general operation of these 'punk spaces' does place a

clear emphasis on facilitiating DIY ethics and production practices, and activist organising. In its level of commonality across disparate contexts, the relationship between anarchism and punk is once again shown to be very strong indeed.

CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDY FOCUS C – DIY PUNK IN INDONESIA: REPRESSION AND RELIGION

Fig. 5.1 – 'Free Aceh Punx' zine, Bandung, January 2012.

The Indonesian punk scene came to international media attention in December 2011, following the abduction, forced detention, and torture of 64 punks in the remote northern province of Aceh. At gunpoint, they were taken from a gig in Banda Aceh to a military/police base where their clothes were burnt, piercings removed, women were given 'respectable hair cuts' and men had their heads shaved, before being forced to bathe in a stagnant pond which doubled as a 'cleansing pool.' They were eventually released after a ten day 'Qur'an bootcamp,' and were awarded with certificates for good behaviour. Some of the abductees had come from as far away as Jakarta to attend the gig, and had no way to inform their families or workplaces of what was happening to them. At no point were they arrested or charged with a criminal offence. International human rights organisations expressed their disapproval of the behaviour of the Banda Aceh Civil Police, who enforce Shariah law there, but the flurry of critical attention did not bring forth apologies from the authorities. Repression has been a pervasive theme throughout punk's existence across the world, but the severity and the involvement of religion *and* state made this a notable case. During the course of the research, it was discovered that the repression in Banda Aceh was not exceptional for Indonesian punks.

A gig in Indonesia[1]

The surging crowd billowed backwards and forwards, arms and legs flailed, bodies surfed overhead, voices roared in unison. Those floored in the melee were immediately hoisted upright by a dozen helping hands. My flimsy skate-shoes offered little protection from the relentlessly stamping feet

[1] See also: Jim Donaghey, *Goreng Crazy: A Travel Zine from Punk Indonesia*, (Leicester: DIY, 2013), pp. 7-9

around me – better if I'd suffered the day's heat in my steel-toed boots after all. A metal-studded human projectile careered off the stage, scoring three neatly parallel scratches into the skin of my bare arms. No matter, bumps and bruises are par-for-the-course in the cordial violence of any mosh pit. I was in my element within this throng – but jungle creepers dangling overhead placed me far from home. The familiar cacophony emanating from the stage resonated with me – but the people around me were strangers, and the stage itself, lashed together from bamboo canes, seemed exotic and alien. Just another punk gig – but in a new and foreign setting, halfway across the face of the earth. This was my first taste of 'punk Indonesia.'

Fig. 5.2 – Poster for the Subhumans gig in Bandung, September 2012.

The gig was one of many organised by the Bandung Pyrate Punx collective, and of course, they weren't foreign, exotic, alien, or strangers – I was! So too were tonight's headline band, Subhumans, all the way from far-flung Bath (UK), and it was their tour of Australia and South East Asia that had occasioned this gig on the 26th of September 2012. To see international touring bands isn't wholly uncommon in Indonesia's big cities, but neither is it typical. The Indonesian punk scene is massive, but the country's poverty means touring there is not affordable for bands from other countries. The gig was atypical in some other key respects as well. The number of bands on the bill was conspicuously small, just four compared to nine or ten at many other gigs, and this small line-up included bands from fairly closely related punk sub-genres. Other gigs in Indonesia were far more eclectic. One in Medan featured bands playing pop-punk, ska, hardcore, crust, d-beat, and metal, while a gig in Jakarta had Oi!, street-punk, crust, and thrash on the same bill. These more eclectic line-ups are facilitated by the large numbers of bands playing at gigs. Subhumans' status as 'U.K. Anarcho Punk Legends,'[2] resulted in an unusually long set (in excess of an hour in this case) and meant less time for supporting bands. Total Anarchy (thrashy punk) and Krass Kepala (d-beat hardcore) were local

[2] As described on the gig poster.

support bands, while Seven Crowns[3] (hardcore punk) were also from Bath, but were there coincidentally, rather than touring with Subhumans as such. This gig operated in the same way as numerous other gigs in the Bandung scene, but other gigs attended during the research in Jakarta, Medan, Padang, Pekanbaru, and Libertad Fest (on an island in the Java Sea) operated slightly differently. The description here takes the Bandung gig as a departure point, but where appropriate will diverge into descriptions of other gigs, in an attempt to illuminate something of how punk gigs, and the punk scenes generally, operate in Indonesia.

A large earthen bank formed one side of the ten metre-squared open-air gig space, and the large trees that sprouted there hung out their branches overhead to create a living canopy. The jungle creepers that dangled across the branches were supplemented with long strips of Pyrate Punx branded bunting. This rise also provided an amphitheatre-style viewing gallery for those not wishing to be embroiled in the mosh pit that encompassed a large portion of the square below. The back of two huts, used as artist studios, gave two more sides to the space, and on the walls of these were hung black and red anarchist flags, and banners from the local punk collectives. Power had been wired-in from one of the neighbouring huts, and connected to the stage which had been constructed from bamboo, with some metal supports, over previous weeks. It was certainly solid enough to take the weight of equipment as well as leaping band members and stage divers, and had been given a roof to mitigate against the potentially electrifying effects of any sudden equatorial downpours. A large Pyrate Punx banner hung behind the stage, a punk skull and crossbones, as used by Pyrate Punk chapters the world over. The equipment being used was of reasonably good quality, with several large guitar and bass amplifiers, monitor speakers, and a solid-looking drum kit. This backline was shared by all the bands, with each group using their own drum breakables (snare, cymbals, bass drum pedal) and guitars. There was a dedicated crew of sound operatives to make sure everything was properly set up for each band, and

Fig. 5.3 – Moshing melee in Bandung.

[3] Seven Crowns rarely play in their native UK, arguing that 'the inherent conservatism and apathy of the UK punk scene had little or nothing to offer us' (https://www.facebook.com/sevencrowns/info [accessed 28th May 2014]) and have toured Indonesia five or six times. Since touring Indonesia is unlikely to recoup travel costs from the UK, it must be assumed that these frequent tours are heavily subsidised by the band themselves. This was confirmed by Felix who noted that when Seven Crowns played in Medan they didn't ask for any payment at all.

everything had been microphoned, and was being recorded through a fifteen-track desk, to be released as a benefit for Bandung Pyrate Punx at some point in the future.

DIY punk in action in Indonesia

Unusually, the Pyrate Punx in Bandung own most of their own equipment. Drum kits, amplifiers, PA systems, recording desks etc. were partly funded by donations from Pyrate Punk collectives in the US, particularly Oakland, and from punks in Switzerland. Zaqi said, 'we have a benefit … from … Switzerland also, many friends yeh, making benefit for our problem … every [time] we make a show we must rent, rent all the time … [So] they make a benefit to us, buying amps.' Bagus said, 'when we [went] to Europe with Krass Kepala, in 2007, we have a help from a donation from Bremen [Pyrate Punx].'[4] Having their own equipment obviously makes putting on gigs much easier and cheaper, but as Putri pointed out: 'now we have our own equipment … we rent it to other people too,' enabling them to raise further funds to put towards running gigs. But this resource independence is unusual for punks in Indonesia, as Esa from Zudas Krust told *MaximumRockNRoll* zine: 'most punks come from the middle to low class. How can we talk about a proper musical equipment if we still have to think about how to make money to buy something to eat, pay for gas or public transportation, daily needs?'[5] At other gigs local bands who had been asked to play were expected to provide some funds to pay for the running of the gig, including hire of PA, guitar amps and drums. This was termed 'making a collective.' Felix in Medan described it thus:

Fig. 5.4 – Bandung Pyrate Punx drum kit, on stage.

> Yeh, it's a collective idea. We heard that the band, the two bands, [are] touring in Sumatra [KontraSosial and Turtles Jr] ... and we agree to arrange the gigs in here. We find a place and we rent a PA or something like that, and then we decide that we go to the café

[4] Interview conducted 27/09/2012
[5] Interview with Zudas Krust, by Shane Hunter in *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 365, (October 2013), not paginated

> … It's like such a corporate thing ... we don't give money to that place, but they have to take 70% from the ticket, each ticket [10,000 rupiah, about 64p at the time]. And then the gig is collective. The local bands that play, they pay for being there, also we get support from ... distros and things … But not a lot, not much money. And then we set up [the] gig, we start playing ... Actually when tour[ing] bands come to our city, I think there's one thing you have to prepare ... pay their transport and things like that. Yeh, this a good condition. That is why we had a collective of the bands, to make sure ... [whether] there's enough people coming to see that or not, at least we can pay the ticket and they get as planned ... [to] the next city. It's a guarantee, we guarantee.

Fig. 5.5 – Poster for gig in Medan, with twelve bands on the bill.

The rationale is that all the costs are covered up-front, and spread over a wide number of people, so that if the gig goes wrong for whatever reason neither the coordinating organiser nor the travelling bands are left out-of-pocket. In Medan, for example, two travelling bands from Bandung were supported by ten local bands. In the end, not all of these bands even got to play, but the gig was secured against financial difficulties by being able to pay the touring bands' travel costs up-front. That gig was actually well attended (100+ paying to go inside, with that number again congregating outside),[6] and after the venue had taken its 70% cut of the door takings, other costs associated with the gig were covered, though the local bands did not receive their money back. Teuku in Banda Aceh uses the same 'collective' arrangement: 'I get together the bands to pay for registration or contribution, to cover all the things like equipment, venue rental, and the backline, and then other stuff, food, beverage to the bands, to the gas, if the bands want to tour here, for sure. Yeh.'[7] In the UK, gig promoters such as Tommy and Liam spoke about local bands

[6] This was the case for all of the gigs that charged a door fee in Indonesia, and is also noted by Esa in the Zudas Krust interview with *MRR*, 'a regular show will only bring around fifty or a few more punks that buy tickets. The rest are waiting outside to see if they can get inside for free.' (Interview with Zudas Krust, Shane Hunter in *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 365)

[7] Interview conducted 02/10/2012

supporting travelling bands with no expectation of payment – but in Indonesia, local bands are also expected to contribute financially to the running of the gig. This is termed 'pay to play' (or 'buying on' in the case of a tour) in the UK and elsewhere, and is vigorously opposed by DIY punks who criticise it as exploitation of bands by unscrupulous gig promoters. It is interesting then that a fundamentally similar monetary arrangement is termed 'making a collective' in Indonesia, emphasising the collaborative and communal aspects of bands clubbing-together to fund a gig.

Fig. 5.6 – 'Run down' for gig in Pekanbaru, January 2015, with twelve bands on the bill.

The Bandung Pyrate Punx avoid using commercial bars for their gigs wherever possible, so there is no need to hand over 70% of the proceeds for venue hire, as described in Medan.[8] For the Subhumans gig they reached an agreement with a local artists' space called Baksil. Putri said:

> because it's so hard for us to find a place for a gig … we tried Baksil, it's an art place, so that's why y'know, if there is some problem with the ACAB [police], then we just, say 'OK this is [an] art place and this is art,' and even though we have to still get a licence and somewhat compromise with them, you know, it's just hanging out, and then it's just music, and it's an art place as well. But really, still no freedom in my opinion.

The anti-police sentiment is notable (ACAB = All Cops Are Bastards! – see also Appendix 8, part C), and the issues around licences and bribes for setting up gigs will be discussed further below, but a clear advantage of using a space like Baksil is that there is no pressure to raise a certain amount of money from admission fees – which echoes with the differing economic imperatives of squats and legally rented social centres, discussed in case study focus B (Chapter 4). This enabled Bandung Pyrate Punx to ask for an *optional* donation of just 10,000 rupiah for admission to the Subhumans gig. Some of the proceeds raised were donated to the Baksil art space, which, being close to one of the few remaining patches of jungle in Bandung, is under threat from property developers. Zaqi

[8] Esa from Zudas Krust noted that in Jakarta 'most cafe owners don't want to book a show in their places. Now we organise shows on the street, on sports fields, abandoned bus terminals, studios, but yeah we can't do it permanently at one spot. You have to find another space each time. A proper space for a music event can cost you big money.' This was because 'most shows end up bad, with punks fighting each other, wrecking cafe property, etc.' (Interview with Zudas Krust, Shane Hunter in *MaximumRockNRoll*, no. 365). Teuku echoed this, speaking of 'the violence, fight in the mosh pit, so that's why the police came to the show.'

said, 'the government [does] not respect in this place. Here also is the ... public space … so we think we should save this place ... it's also a forest in the city, it's a big one, [but] after that, [there are] no more fields like this in Bandung.' Bagus continued, saying it's a 'big issue too, the government wanna build [a] condominium in here. It's [been] like that last year, or two years.' Money was also donated to a local family who had lost their home and possessions in a devastating house fire, and to a member of the Pyrate Punx collective who had been incarcerated for damaging an ATM in solidarity with farmers struggling against corporate mining ventures.[9] Bandung Pyrate Punx were able to do this, in large part, because Subhumans had agreed to play for free. The collective had helped Subhumans with local transportation, two hotel rooms, some food and beer, but were not expected to cover the costs of flights to and from Indonesia, or pay any kind of performance fee. The cost to the band will have been mitigated somewhat by playing gigs in the wealthier scenes in nearby Singapore and Australia, but the gesture of solidarity remains. This magnanimous act, and the DIY organisation of the gig generally, was contrasted with the gig of another 'famous' punk band, Total Chaos from the US, who in December 2009 ended-up playing a big commercial gig sponsored by a cigarette corporation (among dozens of other sponsors listed on the specially made backdrop), with on-stage minders preventing the band from getting too close to the audience,[10] and police at the front of the stage acting as bouncers.[11] Rifqi reasoned this was because Total Chaos were 'too big, too fancy,' echoing Jon's dismissal of non-DIY events, such as Rebellion Festival in the UK.

[9] To find out more about this struggle see the English language zine published by the Unrest Collective in Indonesia *Farm or Die*, available online at http://www.mediafire.com/view/?qb8s4cwjplg4rop [accessed 24th March 2016]

[10] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWt-ANR2hDU See the minder beckon the singer back around 01:40, and police prevent people from getting onto the stage at 02:12. The video also seems to start with some altercation between the band's drummer and a manager of some sort, with the drummer asking to have some crowd members let back into the gig (assumedly after being expelled), and the band even have to apologise at the end of the set. [accessed 4th June 2014]

[11] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4Rqsn__GG8 The police are visible in this video of the event (around 02:52). [accessed 4th June 2014]

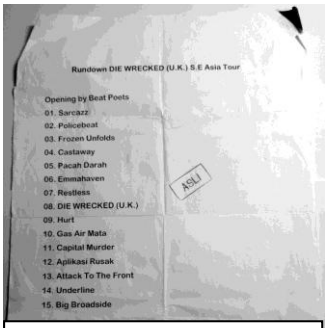

Fig. 5.7 – 'Run down' for gig in Padang, January 2015, with fifteen bands on the bill.

The Bandung Pyrate Punk collective run their operations according to a strict DIY ethos, so the Subhumans gig was in no danger of descending into the same kind of corporate farce as Total Chaos had done three years previously. DIY is an important ethic across the Indonesian punk scene, just as in the UK and Poland. Teuku in Banda Aceh expressed the importance of DIY to him: 'to me personally, DIY is a subculture that [is] penetrated within my heart, my soul, where I'm getting sick of stagnation y'know? And the uniformity of the world that forces us to be "the perfect one" ... I just want to say fuck normality.' Endang, who helps run the Movement Records label in Jakarta said, 'DIY has many definitions, but for us, as a record label, its means that we use hardcore punk alternative media to distribute what we've made, such as bands' records. And not submitting to the mainstream media [like] television or big radio.' Endang also runs the label on an amateur basis: 'I work as a 3D animation designer. We usually use our personal money for the budget of the label production, plus the money we can have from the bands' mechandise [that] we produce and sell.'[12] Being an 'amateur,' that is to say non-professional or not-for-profit, is a key aspect of DIY as understood from an anti-capitalist perspective, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. But, as the Total Chaos gig suggested, not everyone is so committed to the anti-capitalist DIY approach in Indonesia. Interviewee Mr. Hostage discussed the growing influence of tobacco corporations:

Fig. 5.8 – Movement Records 'Do It Yourself Label,' detail from Street Voices, *Kill Me With Your Lips*, (Movement Records, 2010).

> They know what they're doing … thinking about a new way of marketing … a few years [ago] they started to sponsor gigs, not just for punks but for everything else that they see [as] cool. Eventually they got into the underground movement and now it's pretty common to see a show that is sponsored by a tobacco company. Even hardcore straight [edge] bands.[13]

[12] Interview conducted 30/09/2012

[13] The 'even straight edge' comment is because straight edgers don't consume any drugs, including tobacco, so to play a gig sponsored by a tobacco company could be viewed as hypocritical.

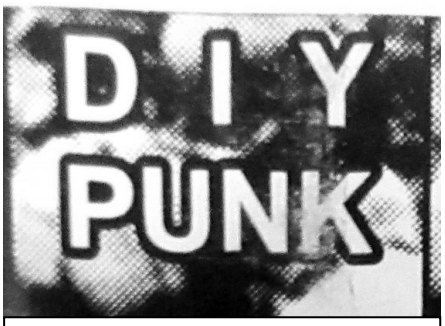

Fig. 5.9 – Detail from Total Destroy, *Biar Mampus*, (Movement Records, 2009).

Echoing Kinga's discussion of this issue in the discussion of DIY in Poland, Mr. Hostage said he could see both the pros and cons of accepting corporate money: 'I mean you've got a chance to pursue your dream, y'know. Like maybe you got tired of playing in front of like five people and then suddenly you got a chance of performing in front of a thousand people, y'know. It's a really tempting offer.' Endang said, 'I don't care about it, I just like [the] music [that is] my own. I make friendships too. I don't try to be a hero … There is punk, DIY punk, and there are label punks, it's no problem.' Septian, who plays in several Jakarta DIY street-punk and Oi! bands, followed this same live-and-let-live mentality:

> Some punks [are] still in the way of being DIY, but others accept support from … [a] label or a company. Some here are making a difference, y'know, that's your way, that's my way, but for me, I'll still support [punks on labels] as friends. We're not gonna fight … we're not [going to] force you to do this to the death, because that's why we're here, we make friends us punks, but I don't force, we don't force anybody to believe what we believe, y'know?

Fig. 5.10 – 'DIY or die,' tattoo in Bandung.

This forgiving attitude towards non-DIY punk is unusual compared to the situation in the UK and Poland, where DIY is viciously protected, and any transgressors are unceremoniously ejected from the DIY scene, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. Agus, however, was more wary of the dangers of associating with business interests:

> If we have sponsors, maybe we are under control. We're under control, like major label control … [sponsors] can do whatever they want … and that's why we don't have any sponsor because we're on our own. DIY, pure DIY. And we could say that being on our own also makes the band autodidactic.[14]

[14] Interview conducted 29/09/2012

Fig. 5.11 – Punk wares for sale in Medan.

So while DIY is recognised as a key aspect of the Indonesian punk scene, it appears to be less strictly enforced as in the UK or Poland. This might simply be because opportunities to 'sell-out' are more numerous in Indonesia, where corporate interest in punk remains relatively high. And indeed, the far higher levels of poverty in Indonesia would make such offers far more lucrative. However, this could also point to a differing interpretation of DIY ethics and production practices, especially under the influence of neo-liberal capitalism, as suggested by Sean Martin-Iverson, referenced elsewhere here.

As well as maintaining a DIY ethos in music production, Agus also noted other 'positive things, like being entrepreneurs of T-shirt printing.' At all the gigs attended during the research there were at least half a dozen stalls selling their DIY-made wares, and indeed, a great many punks involve themselves in various aspects of producing merchandise, whether screen printing patches and t-shirts, or running distros. Many do consider it an expression of a DIY mentality, in that they are free from the yoke of wage slavery and subordination to a boss. However, Agus's use of the word 'entrepreneur' is jarring (at least from an anarchist European punk perspective). Eka complained of the:

> many misconceptions of DIY things. Because, for example, lots of friends, they do lots of screen printing and they're only DIY in terms of doing their own business [working for themselves], but they sell it … in a way … like the same as capitalism, even though it's small … this is the same shit … There's no fair trade, no fair sale, it's just like becoming personal or group profits, and they just use the word DIY [to] appear punk.

Fig. 5.12 – Several distro stalls at gig in Jakarta.

She considered that this was because her 'friends are so afraid to come out from the so-called "comfort zone," because they've been really constantly terrorised with … the definition of needs that's created by the capitalists.' In Eka's opinion, most people involved in DIY punk fail to get beyond the profit imperative of capitalism, and end-up just reproducing capitalist practices and social relations. Arief is more optimistic. He became involved

with the Bandung Pyrate Punx because he saw it as a 'movement open to people who can think freely ... Many individual anarchists support the Bandung Pyrate Punx, [because] their movement introduces to other people [the] DIY and anti-capitalism spirit.' For Arief, DIY and anti-capitalism go hand-in-hand, and certainly, for the Bandung Pyrate Punx, this emphasis is important. DIY is also a frequent lyrical theme for many Indonesian punk bands (see, for example, Appendix 9, part C). So, even while DIY appears to be less rigidly adhered to in Indonesia, or at least interpreted distinctly to the UK and Poland contexts, there are a significant number of scene participants that seek to challenge this – especially those individuals, collectives, and bands associated with anarchism.

Repression of punk in Indonesia

In addition to financial difficulties, state authorities also present a problem for organising gigs. The venue for the Bandung gig, according to the printed and online promotion material, was Klub Racun (Posion Club) – but Klub Racun has no fixed address. Taufan joked: 'everybody asks to me, "where is the Klub Racun?" I dunno! [laughs]' 'It's everywhere!' added Putri. In fact, 'Klub Racun' is obfuscation for the authorities, with the actual location of the gig being disseminated by word-of-mouth in the few days prior to the gig to limit the chances of being pre-emptively disrupted. 'Police is problem' said Taufan, '*really big* problem.' Putri said, 'we call it ACAB [All Cops Are Bastards].' The major difficulty is that gigs and other public events in Indonesia require a licence from the local police. The police ask for details of the gig, including which bands are playing, as well as the songs that will be played and lyrics that will be sung. Putri explained the repressive consequences of this: 'If the lyrics contain [references to] military whatever, police bullshit, [that] kinda thing, "no," they will say. See! No human rights anywhere. There is no freedom really.' Krass Kepala and KontraSosial are both 'apparently blacklisted by the cops,' and a band that Gilang played with circa 2001 'couldn't play [on the order of] the police … they thought we are communist band [so were] prohibited everywhere.' This very much echoes the prohibitions against bands like SS-20 in Poland in the 1980s, discussed in Chapter 2, though that repression was of course *by* 'communists,' not against them. Even if a licence is acquired, the gig will still be plagued by police seeking bribes, on the threat that they will shut down the gig. As Putri expained:

Fig. 5.13 – Hands up if you know where Klub Racun is!

> When we have [a gig] in the middle of town, in like a bar or café … cops will always know, and cops will always come, and then they'll ask for money and they'll leave, but they tell their friends, 'oh, there's this show' … Different people come [and] ask for more money, and then they'll tell their other friends and then more cops come, and then ask for more money. That kinda thing.

On one occasion, when the bribes must have been considered insufficient, a gig featuring Australian band PissChrïst was 'closed down' before PissChrïst even got to play:

> They can just go inside the bar, or the café where we play … and they just say 'shut this down,' for whatever reason … just because they think there's punks here, they're gonna create 'chaos,' whatever. We weren't doing anything! Just listening to music, just hanging out with friends, but [when] they say 'shut it down,' we have to shut it down.

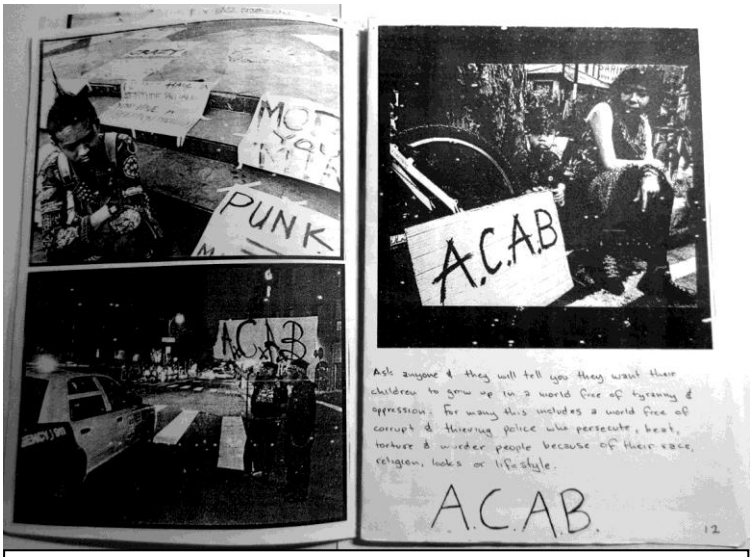

Fig. 5.14 – 'All Cops Are Bastards,' pages from 'Free Aceh Punx' zine, Bandung, January 2012.

It was with some pride that Zaqi informed me that for the Subhumans gig 'we [didn't] like send the letter to [the police], or give money for a permit ... Last night we had the cops coming and we just gave them four packets of cigarettes and they went. So minimum compromise like that.' With this level of harassment it is unsurprising that anti-police feeling is as high within the Indonesian punk scene as anywhere else in the world. Using the English language ACAB [All Cops Are Bastards] acronym obviously has an international influence, but also has practical benefits as an expression of anger against the police, since most Indonesian police do not understand or are not familiar with it. One local punk was wearing a patch which read '*Polisi Anjing*' [the police are dogs – dogs being viewed as ugly and dirty by Islamic doctrine] when he was apprehended, resulting in serious trouble and a serious beating. 'When we write ACAB, the cops just like don't realise,' said Bagus, 'because they don't understand,' added Putri. This anti-police sentiment is also shared among punks in the UK and Poland, as will be discussed below (and in Appendix 8, parts A and B), and is a clear expression of anarchist sensibilities and opposition to the state.

Putri explained that to evade this harassment some gig promoters hold gigs inside one of the numerous military bases around Bandung:

> because the cops can't come in and touch them, because the cops can't go inside there … Which is stupid in my opinion because it's like why do you have it there? The army's just the same. Police/military base whatever! … KontraSosial refused to play there … and I think Krass Kepala refused to play there as well. And my band as well, I said we were never gonna play there.

Aulia, a member of the Bandung Pyrate Punx, but originally from the US, was particularly perturbed by this issue:

> Well I think that, y'know, it's interesting because a lot of the people I know here, they say they're anarchist, but they pay the military to have a show at a military base, so they don't have a problem with the police … And I always ask them why? Why would you do that? Like why is [it] better to pay the military than the police for a show? … I had this big debate with a really good friend of mine there. I said, 'I'm against having shows at a military base, I don't support that, I think that's fucked up, I think that supporting the military or the police in any way, paying them any kinda money for a punk show is fucked up.' And he said to me, really simply, 'this is Indonesia, where else can we have shows?' Like, alotta punks here don't see any other possibility but to barter with the police and with the military, and that's, to me as a Westerner, that's really fucking anti-anarchist. But, I can also kind of understand, living here for two years I can kind of understand 'OK, there's no other place to have the show, there's no other place that we can do this, there's no other place that we can speak our minds. We have to pay the military or the police.'

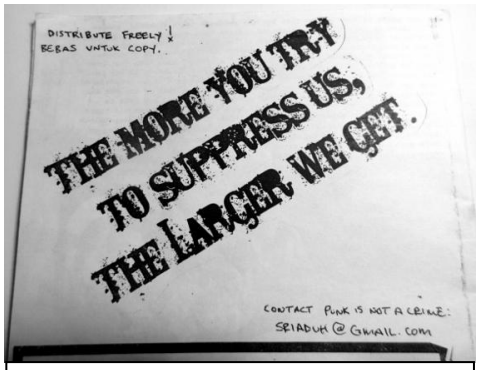

Fig. 5.15 – 'The more you try to suppress us, the larger we get.' Detail from 'Free Aceh Punx' zine, Bandung, January 2012.

Aulia's perception of punk gigs in army bases as 'anti-anarchist' is understandable, since the army is obviously an especially oppressive arm of the state, and in the context of Indonesia the military is also heavily involved in government. But the other option is to use a commercial venue and ask permission from the police for a permit, and then face police harassment anyway. Neither option

offers much in terms of autonomy, and highlights a particularly stark difference in the levels of repression of punk in Indonesia to repression experienced in the UK or Poland.

Repression of punk in Poland and the UK

Punks in Indonesia face regular repression by the state, especially in toxic combination with fundamentalist religion. This level of repression is not faced by punks in Poland or the UK, except where punks are engaged in explicitly anarchist organising and activism, or in the form of harassment and repression of squatted social centres as discussed especially in the Poland case study focus.

Fig. 5.16 – Detail from Infekcja, *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011).

Some of the repression that greeted the historical emergence of punk in the UK, Poland and Indonesia has been described in a previous chapter. However, in both the UK and Poland, interviewees stated that there was no real sense of current state repression against punk culture. As Kinga in Warsaw put it:

> Back then [1980s, early-1990s], it could have happened, easily. Like you could be driving to the police car and beaten-up and your piercings could be taken off and stuff. But now they are more, maybe, they are more conscious of people wear[ing] different [clothes] these days. Like tunnels here [points to ears], and piercings everywhere, tattoos especially on these parts that you can see outside [laughs] … I haven't been stopped on the street like for some time.

George in Manchester echoed Kinga's view of shifting attitudes to punk from the state and wider society: 'It's very different times, and I think punk had a very different connotation. It was seen as violence and synonymous with trouble … Bearing in mind as well, we're sat in a nice café … and no one's batted an eyelid at me and you walking in.' Oisín said that, other than a recent ban on public drinking at a favourite punk hangout in Camden:

> I really don't think the police in London … affect the punk scene really … Like to be honest with you, now the police are more worried about like kids hanging round on estates

> dealing drugs and things like that, than they're worried about a bunch of drunk punks, as long as there's like no fighting going [on], they tend to just sorta let it go.

In stark contrast to the examples of police/state repression in Indonesia, Oisín recounted an instance of the typical attitude of (at least some) police to typical punk misdemeanours:

> There's a punk called [Santo] who's always walking around Camden drunk out of his mind. I met him at eight o'clock one morning, I was sort of riding into Camden to start work, and he was staggering around pissed out of his head at eight o'clock in the morning, can of beer in his hand. Cop comes up to him, knows him by name, says '[Santo]!' And [Santo] looks round and sticks the can into his pocket. [The cop] says, 'yeh … you should know better now.' He just walked off and left him, knowing full well he's gonna drink it.

Fig. 5.17 – 'ACAB' patch in the UK.

Katie, also in London, agreed saying, 'I think we're actually … pretty safe in this country compared to a lot of countries … Actually we've got it easy here, we're quite lucky in a lot of ways compared to the Middle East where you'll lose your life if you go out the door at the wrong time.' In 2013 Greater Manchester Police (with another eight forces doing so subsequently)[15] began classifying 'alternative sub-cultures' as protected minorities, recording attacks on 'Goths, Emos, Punks and Metallers … in the same way as disability, racist, religious, sexual orientation and transgender hate crime,'[16] with the *strange* result that police forces were arguably 'protecting' punk. This was a direct result of the murder of Sophie Lancaster in 2007, who was beaten to death because of her goth aesthetic. *The Mirror* reported that in the scheme's first year, 21 hate crimes were recorded in Manchester on the basis of 'sub-culture.'[17] However, without any actual legislative change, 'hate crimes' against goths and punks cannot actually be punished with harsher sentences. According to GMP's Assistant Chief Constable Garry Shewan, recording attacks on goths and punks as 'hate crime' means: 'that we can recognise the impact that alternative sub-culture hate crime has on its victims and the wider community, we

[15] Leicestershire Police became the ninth force to follow suit in 2015: 'Subculture abuse classed as hate crime,' *BBC News*, (25th November 2015): http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-34919722?ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbc_leicester&ns_source=twitter&ns_linkname=english_regions%3FSThisFB [accessed 28th November 2015]

[16] http://gmp.police.uk/content/WebsitePages/BCE5CBFBA182F06380257B43002A81E5?OpenDocument [accessed 1st June 2015]

[17] Compared with 2,687 reported racially motivated hate crimes, 373 on the basis of sexual orientation and against trans people, 244 because of religion, and 106 because of disability. Anna Leach, 'Manchester Police report 21 hate crimes against Goths, emos and punks in 2013,' *The Mirror*, (20th January 2014), http://ampp3d.mirror.co.uk/2014/01/20/manchester-police-report-21-hate-crimes-against-goths-emos-and-punks-in-2013/ [accessed 1st June 2015]

can offer better support and risk assess the potential for repeat victimisation.'[18] This clearly emphasises the extent to which punk, as an aesthetic and sub-culture at least, has been recuperated into the mainstream – even being granted 'protection' by Greater Manchester Police. But the persistence of attacks against people *because* they are a punk or a goth is also starkly highlighted, not least by the murder of Sophie Lancaster. Right-wing journalists expressed their derision for punks and goths in their reporting of GMP's announcement. The *Daily Mail*'s Jaya Narain guffawed that '[i]f you punch a punk or kick a metaller in Manchester, you could soon be hauled before the courts and charged with a hate crime.'[19] Richard Littlejohn (of the same 'newspaper') complained that 'it's [now] a crime to hate the Sex Pistols' while recalling that his 'Geordie mate Black Mike always jokes when he spots a Sid Vicious lookalike gobbing his way down the High Street: "Gi' us a stick and I'll kill it."' He further notes that any legislation should in fact be 'designed to protect society from gangs of punks and heavy metal headbangers,' as he glibly remarks: '[r]ound up the lot of them and throw away the key.'[20] Like Littlejohn, the BBC's Jeremy Vine considered that, by their nature, punks are violent and deserving of any they get in return.[21] As Littlejohn puts it: '[u]pset one of them and you'll probably end up with a motorcycle chain wrapped round your head. And that's just the women.'[22] The GMP representative interviewed by Jeremy Vine actually had to pipe-up to defend punks from Vine's anti-punk rant.

Fig. 5.16 – 'ACAB' sticker in the UK.

[18] http://gmp.police.uk/content/WebsitePages/BCE5CBFBA182F06380257B43002A81E5?OpenDocument
[19] Jaya Narain, 'Police to classify attacks on goths and punks as hate crimes in a bid to recognise "alternative subcultures" after killing of girl with 20 piercings in her face,' *Daily Mail*, (4th April 2013), http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2303697/Police-classify-attacks-goths-punks-hate-crimes-bid-recognise-alternative-subcultures.html [accessed 1st June 2015]
[20] Richard Littlejohn, 'And now it's a crime to hate the Sex Pistols,' *Daily Mail*, (4th April 2013), http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2304168/And-crime-hate-Sex-Pistols.html [accessed 1st June 2015]
[21] Jeremy Vine Show, Radio 2, (4th April 2013), http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01rj3rf [accessed 1st June 2015]
[22] Littlejohn, 'And now it's a crime to hate the Sex Pistols'

Fig. 5.19 – Disc of Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011). 'ACAB' visible near top, with up-turned burning police car.

However, this does not diminish from anti-police sentiment among punks in the UK (see Appendix 8, part A for some examples). In addition to the reams of anti-police punk lyrics, patches, images, slogans etc., those few individuals in the punk scene who choose to take jobs with the police, prison officers, border agency goons, or detention centre guards are actively shunned from the scene. One recent high-profile instance was that of Nicky 'Gunrack' Williams, who played in the Cardiff-based 'punk' band Solutions. He was identified in a video of UKBA officers forcibly removing a family from their home to be deported.[23] Williams' father played in a band called No Choice, and as a result of making excuses/apologies for his son's 'career' choice, his band were also identified as 'pro-UKBA' and gig promoters were actively discouraged from inviting them to play gigs.[24] This effort at blacklisting is also evident in a 'Community' page on a social media site with the title 'Member of Cardiff "punk" band Solutions works for UK Border Agency.'[25] The tactics employed to highlight Williams' highly dubious occupation, and the subsequent violent threats against him, are open to question (as was the case from several 'commenters' at the time), but a 'punk' working for UKBA is clearly viewed as seriously problematic by many and worthy of threats of violence by some. Even if *some* UK police forces recognise punk as a 'protected minority,' punks remain *vehemently* anti-police.

Adrian in Warsaw said that punk is 'something they [the state] have realised is not a threat itself, as long as it's just people going to shows or wearing different clothes.' However, when punk culture is engaged in anarchist activism, in the ways described Chapter 2 (and throughout the thesis), it is often targeted by the state. Adrian spoke of the situation of some anarchist activists in Poznań and other cities 'where people have to … dig themselves really deep to avoid being arrested [and] face

[23] The story (and usual torrent of comments 'below-the-line') is documented here: News item posted by 'Real Punk,' 'Cardiff "punk" is UKBA thug,' *Indymedia UK*, (23rd October 2012), https://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2012/10/501707.html?c=on [accessed 1st March 2016]
[24] News item posted by '(A) punk in London,' 'pro-UKBA band playing south London,' *Indymedia UK*, (2nd February 2013), https://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2013/02/506171.html [accessed 1st March 2016]
[25] https://www.facebook.com/Member-of-Cardiff-punk-band-Solutions-works-for-UK-Border-Agency-292881164156632/ [accessed 1st March 2016]

charges which are really serious.' Natalia, who lives in Poznań, gave some examples of police harassment and repression:

> When they know that we are making a demonstration they are going to [our] homes. They have, I dunno, twenty names, and they are going to our homes and asking, 'what will you do tomorrow' or asking your mother what will you do tomorrow, it's like normal thing.
>
> This is repression because they are always going to the same persons. And they have the few names that are always the same names. My boyfriend, his brother … like every month we have [a] paper from the court … Sometimes he's like on the back of demonstrations, he's not doing anything but, yeh 'you've been there, you are from this group, so you are going,' and he has to *prove* that he wasn't doing anything.

Fig. 5.20 – Riot police in Poland. Detail from Stracony, *Uważajcie – Bomby Wiszą Nad Waszymi Głowami*, (Tribal War, 1999).

Megan in Brighton discussed police repression, when they closed-down a punk gig there because of anti-fascist organising (as also mentioned in Chapter 2):

> Well the past couple of years the punx picnic has been scheduled specifically to coincide with [the English Defence League racist march], and specifically to spend the Friday and Saturday encouraging people to come out on the Sunday … The last couple of years it's worked really well. This year, the police came and shut punx picnic down on the Sunday 'for our own safety.'

Fig. 5.21 – Cover of *Bastards In Blue* compilation by Now Or Never! (c. 2012).

So, clearly, repression of punk in the UK and Poland looks quite different to that in Indonesia. In the UK and Poland state repression occurs when punk is explicitly engaged in anarchist activism, while its general cultural

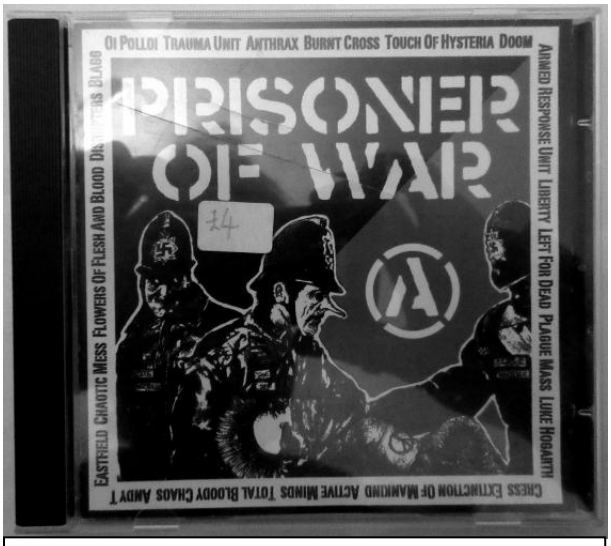

Fig. 5.22 – British police (with Nazi insignia on their helmets) on cover of *Prisoner of War,* benefit compilation, (POW, 2011).

activities (gigs etc.) are ignored, or even 'protected' as in the case of the Greater Manchester Police's hate crime classification (though punks, 'political' or not, remain firmly and vocally opposed to the police). In Indonesia, the state is wholly ignorant of any political associations punk might have, and repress it for the most part on explicitly religious grounds. This might be expected to set the punks in Indonesia clearly against religion, but this is not the case. The relationship between religion and punk is by no means straight-forward in the context of Indonesia.

Fig. 5.23 – T-shirt of Indonesian band, Jahat, in pastiche of the cover image of Doom's 'Police Bastard' EP.

Fig. 5.24 – Cover of Turtles Jr, *Murder*, (Kuyangora Records, 2013).

Punk and religion

'I am an antichrist.'[26]

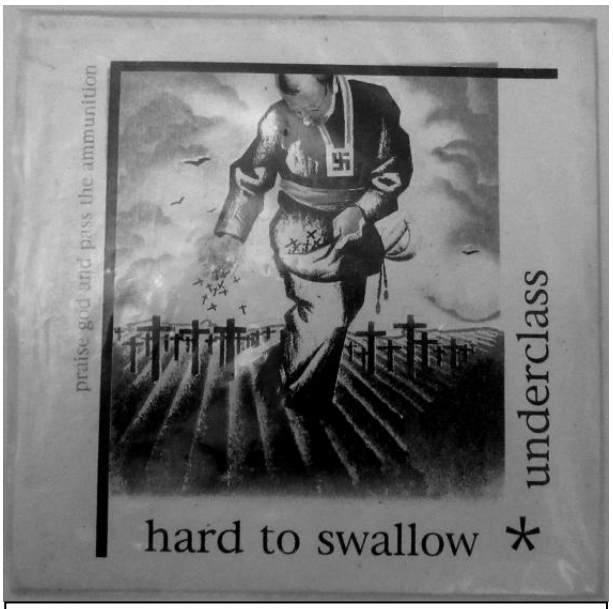

Fig. 5.25 – Hard To Swallow/Underclass split, *Praise God and Pass the Ammunition*, (Days of Fury, 1996). Cover features image from Spanish Civil War poster.

In 'the West' the *vast* majority of punk's engagements with religion are antagonistic and oppositional: the church is a target for the kick-back against social control; spirituality is a hippie affliction to be discarded with the flares and flowers; god must be abolished. Religion, meanwhile, is generally uninterested in punk, aside from a few sporadic fits of 'moral panic' in the late-1970s in the UK[27] and early-1980s[28] in the US. Some scholars sympathetic to religious cultural engagements downplay the extent of punk's hostility to religion. For example Ibrahim Abraham argues that 'once Christians in the punk scene convince their non-religious and anti-religious peers that they are not an alien force seeking to control the scene, but an organic development from within it, they are usually accepted.' He does concede that 'this is not to say that Christianity is warmly embraced within punk; it is routinely contested, mocked, or simply ignored.'[29] It cannot be refuted that Christian punk bands do exist, but the idea that they are an active or accepted part of punk scenes is difficult to maintain against the tide of vehemently anti-religious (usually specifically anti-Christian)

[26] Sex Pistols, 'Anarchy in the UK,' *Never Mind the Bollocks*, (Virgin, 1977)

[27] For example Bernard Brooke Partridge railed against punk in terms of moral depravity as 'disgusting, degrading, ghastly, sleazy, prurient, voyeuristic and generally nauseating … vastly improved by sudden death … the antithesis of humankind.' (Delivered to camera in *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, Julien Temple (dir.), (1980); quoted in Huxley, '"Ever Get the Feeling You've Been Cheated?",' in *Punk Rock: So What?*, p. 95). There was also a demonstration against a Sex Pistols gig in Caerphilly in 1976, organised by local church groups. A local journalist at the time recalls the national media calling the Sex Pistols 'the devil's spawn,' (Wayne Nowaczyk, former reporter with *Rhymney Valley Express*, quoted in 'When punk rock came to Caerphilly,' BBC News website, (15th December 2006), http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/6180555.stm) [accessed 24th April 2015]

[28] Tipper Gore took the Dead Kennedys to court for 'distributing harmful matter to a minor' over their 1985 *Frankenchrist* album, which featured H. R. Giger's 'Penis Landscape' on the insert. See: Brock Ruggles, *Not So Quiet on the Western Front. Punk Politics During the Conservative Ascendancy in the United States, 1980-2000*, (Ann Arbor: ProQuest, 2008), p. 178, or Jeffrey Ressner 'Frankenchrist Trial Ends In Hung Jury,' *Rolling Stone*, (October 1987), available at http://www.alternativetentacles.com/page.php?page=frankenchristtrial1 [accessed 31st March 2015]

[29] Ibrahim Abraham, 'Christian Punk & Populist Traditionalism,' *Article Two*, issue 22, (n.d.), p. 25

lyrics and imagery that pours forth from *most* punk scenes (see Appendix 10 for examples from the UK, Poland *and* Indonesia). Therefore, it will be worthwhile to explore, briefly, some examples of punk's general hostility to religion. This will also facilitate comparison with the primary focus on the Indonesian context.

The grand old spectre of the Sex Pistols has already been raised, but anarcho-punk progenitors Crass poured vitriol on religion more fiercely than their early punk predecessors.[30] 'Asylum,' a pointed attack on Christianity, was intended as the opening track on their debut album *Feeding of the 5000*. A few excerpts reveal the venomous tone:

> I am no feeble Christ, not me.
> He hangs in glib delight upon his cross.
> …
> I vomit for you, Jesu. Christi-Christus.
> Puke upon your papal throne.
> …
> He hangs upon his cross in self-righteous judgment,
> hangs in crucified delight, nailed to the extent of his vision.
> …
> You scooped the pits of Auschwitz.
> The soil of Treblinka is rich in your guilt,
> the sorrow of your tradition.
> Your stupid humility is the crown of thorn we all must wear.
> …
> You sigh alone in your cock fear!
> You lie alone in your cunt fear!
> You cry alone in your woman fear!
> You die alone in your man fear!
> …
> Jesus died for his own sins. Not mine.[31]

A pressing plant in Ireland refused to handle what they saw as blasphemous content,[32] but the song was eventually released as a 7" single alongside 'Shaved Women' in 1979, and on the second issue of

[30] In an article focussing on the anarchistic roots laid down in early punk I noted several anti-religious songs from early punk bands. In addition to those mentioned here. 'Siouxsie and the Banshees, "The Lord's Prayer," the Damned, "Anti-Pope," Suburban Studs, "No Faith."' Donaghey, 'Bakunin Brand Vodka,' p. 158
[31] Crass, 'Reality Asylum,' *Reality Asylum/Shaved Women*, (Crass Records, 1979)

Feeding of the 5000 (the Second Sitting).[33] The closing lines became a Crass motto, and indeed, the Crass logo, which was designed to adorn printed versions of the 'Reality Asylum' poem in its original format, subverts the Christian cross by combining it with a self-consuming two-headed snake, transforming it into an arrangement reminiscent of a swastika in reiteration of the Auschwitz and Treblinka accusations. With even less ambiguity, Bad Religion, formed in 1979 in the US, used a Christian cross contained in a red circle bisected by a red line (in the style of an official prohibition notice) as their logo. As their name suggests, religion is a frequent theme in their lyrical output. For example, from the 1988 album *Suffer*:

> 1000 more fools are being born every fucking day.
> They try to tell me that the lamb is on the way,
> with microwave transmissions they bombard us every day.
> The masses are obsequious, contented in their sleep,
> the vortex of their minds ensconced within the murky deep.[34]

Or on 2002's *The Process of Belief* album:

> The process of belief is an elixir when you're weak.
> I must confess, at times I indulge it on the sneak,
> but generally my outlook's not so bleak (and I'm not so meek!).
> I'm materialist, a full-blown realist (physical terrorist),
> and I guess I'm full of doubt, but I'll gladly have it out with you.
> I'm materialist, I ain't no deist.
> It's there for all to see, so don't speak of hidden mysteries with me.[35]

These lyrics go beyond a simple rejection of the church to a considered attack on religiousness itself. Many punk lyrics forego the philosophical engagement of Bad Religion, or the subversive theological parody of Crass, in favour of a more blunt approach. For example, Oi Polloi's 'Religious Con' states simply: 'This bigoted crap is fuckin' absurd, I'll take a shit on your holy word.'[36] But whatever the particular approach taken by punk bands, opposition to religion is a prevalent theme.

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[32] Crass left a gap of silence in place of 'Asylum' for the original pressing, entitled 'The Sound of Free Speech.' (*Feeding of the 5000*, (Small Wonder Records, 1979))
[33] Crass, *Feeding of the 5000. The Second Sitting*, (Crass Records, 1981)
[34] Bad Religion, '1000 More Fools,' *Suffer*, (Epitaph, 1988)
[35] Bad Religion, 'Materialist,' *The Process of Belief*, (Epitaph, 2002)
[36] Oi Polloi, 'Religious Con,' *Fuaim Catha*, (Mass Prod, 1999)

- **Anarchist anti-theist punk**

Fig. 5.26 – Portrait of Bakunin on the wall of Odzysk squat, Poznań.

In most instances the anti-religious position expressed by interviewees was informed by anarchism, and this was the case in all three case study contexts – the UK, Poland, and Indonesia (though anti-religiousness was far less common in Indonesia overall). Like punk, anarchism is a multifarious entity, without any defining programme, re-created and mutated in a democratic/bottom-up fashion by new generations of participants. So, just as we encounter occasional religious engagements with punk, there are some instances of religious engagements with anarchism (Tolstoy's Christian Anarchism, the Catholic Worker Movement etc.).[37] However, *most* anarchisms are resolutely anti-clerical and usually anti-theistic, often in terms echoing Michael Bakunin's early consideration of religion from an anarchist perspective, in *God and the State*:

> The first revolt is against the supreme tyranny of theology, of the phantom of God. As long as we have a master in heaven, we will be slaves on earth.[38]
>
> His existence necessarily implies the slavery of all that is beneath him. Therefore, if God existed, only in one way could he serve human liberty – by ceasing to exist…. *[I]f God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him*.[39]

For punks engaged with and informed by anarchist politics, religion and the church are parts of the state's oppressive apparatus, serving as justification of its domination and subjects' submission. Examples of this Bakuninist attack on 'god' (perhaps as distinct from the attacks on *religion* mentioned elsewhere) is evident in punk as well, including the Dis Sucks song 'Dear God' which has

[37] See: Alexandre Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel*, (Abridged Edition), (Luton: Andrews UK, 2013); Paul Cudenec, *The Anarchist Revelation*, (Sussex: Winter Oak Press, 2013); A. Terrance Wiley, *Angelic Troublemakers. Religion and anarchism in America*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); John A. Rapp, *Daoism and Anarchism. Critiques of state autonomy in ancient and modern China*, (London: Continuum, 2012) which includes as an appendix a 'Buddhist anarchist tract' by Bao Jingyan.

[38] Michael Bakunin, *Man, Society, and Freedom*, (The Anarchist Library online edition, 2012, [1871]) p. 5, accessed at: http://www.rebelworker.org/archive/E%20LIBRARY/Bakunin,%20Michail/michail-bakunin-man-society-and-freedom.pdf [accessed 13th March 2016]

[39] Michael Bakunin, *God and the State*, (London: Freedom Press, 1910 [1874]), p. 16. Labadie Collection scanned version accessed online at: http://www.libcom.org/files/God%20and%20the%20State%20%28Freedom%201910%29.pdf [accessed 13th March 2016] [emphasis in original]

the lyrics: 'And even if there was a god I still would not believe. 'Cause that would mean he's got me and I'd rather fuckin' die.'[40]

Instances of 'positive' engagement between religion and punk do occur, as stressed by the likes of Abraham, but in their opposition to religion the majority of punk scenes view these relationships as problematic. For example Leftöver Crack's 'Atheist Anthem' takes aim at Christian punks in the US:

> Those straight-edge Christ-core motherfuckers,
> they don't know shit.
> They're just looking for easy answers,
> and they're too close minded
> to look past their local church,
> or whatever the ignorant masses say is true.
>
> When the laws of God just make ya pissed
> you better become an atheist.
> Dead, dead, dead, dead.
> Your god is dead to me![41]

In a similar vein, Robin Banks' *Hardcore Guide to Christianity* zine explains a perceived incompatibility between Christianity and punk (reductive though it is):

> [T]he ultimate law of Christianity is obedience. Because obedience and rebellion are simply not compatible, then I believe that hc/punk is not compatible with Christianity. This same argument could go for any situation in which a system of control and obedience (Soviet-style communism, Islam [the very name means "submission!"], capitalism, psychiatry, etc.) is trying to integrate with a system of rebellion and autonomy (anarchist cells, wildcat strikes, pirate fleets, workers' collectives, etc.). It just won't fucking work.[42]

So while religiously engaged punk does exist, even to the extent to warrant a backlash and efforts to expunge examples of this overlap, this is very much a fringe minority which is actively rejected by most punk scenes (at least in 'Western' contexts).

[40] Dis Sucks, 'Dear God,' *A Room with a View of a World of Shit*, (Subvert & Deny, 1997)
[41] Leftöver Crack, 'Atheist Anthem,' *Mediocre Generica*, (Hellcat, 2001)
[42] Robin Banks, *The Hardcore Guide to Christianity*, (DIY, 1999), p. 30, [square brackets in original]

- **Religion and punk in the UK and Poland**

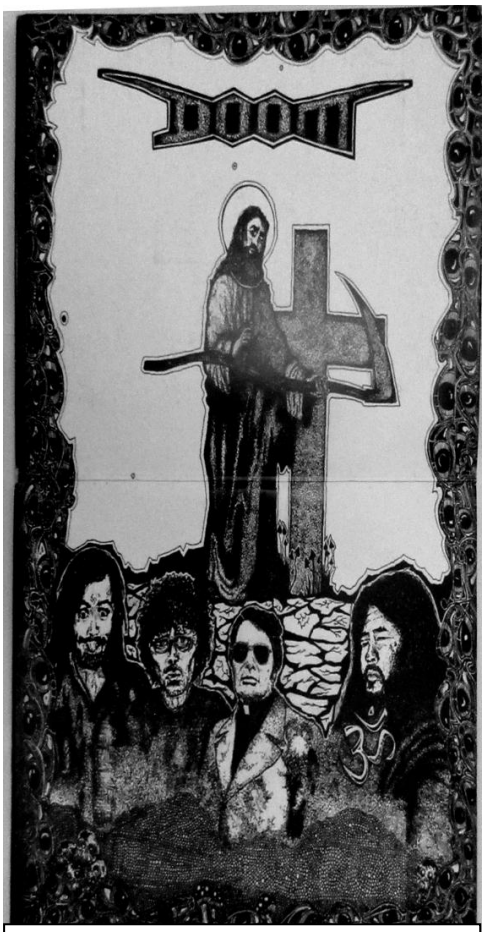

Fig. 5.27 – Detail from Doom, *Rush Hour of the Gods*, (Flat Earth, Active Distro, 1996).

Research information gathered in the UK and Poland reinforces the perception of punk as standing in opposition to religion. A very brief overview of some key statements from interviewees in these scenes will provide a sense of this, and provide useful comparison with the Indonesian context.

In the UK, the response given by interviewee Liz was typical, saying simply, 'I am not religious.' George, asked what the relationship between punk and religion might be, answered, 'mainly nothing. If religion did creep in it was as a reaction to it, a response to it, to patriarchy.' Another interviewee, Megan, was fairly ambivalent to religion, but mentioned that she had religious friends, and said, 'as long as you're not actively trying to oppress me I suppose you can do what you want,' though added the qualification, 'I mean obviously as soon as they start actively trying to oppress people I'm quite critical of the whole thing.' For most interviewees religion was not a major preoccupation. They almost all described themselves as atheists, but many displayed an attitude of uninterested indifference to religion, rather than outright hostility. The idea that religion might have any association with punk whatsoever was alien to most of the interview respondents, to the extent that they hardly saw a need to formulate a reaction to it, beyond dismissing it offhandedly. Two interviewees (out of seventeen) expressed any religiosity whatsoever. Kate had an interest in paganism and tarot card reading, while Isabelle was the *only* UK respondent to state that she was a Christian. However, Isabelle did not see any value in trying to connect or synthesise religion and punk:

> I tried to connect them at one point by listening to like Five Iron Frenzy and MxPx, kind of Christian

Fig. 5.28 - Sawn Off split w/ Health Hazard, (Smack in the Mouth, 1997).

> kinda things, and I was like 'I don't really like these bands!' [laughs] When I play football religion does not come into that, so I'm like, why should that come into my music as well?

This was an attitude shared by many of the Indonesian interviewees, as will be discussed below. Liam, from Belfast, expressed a more hostile attitude to religion, which might be explained by the preponderance of religious fundamentalism and the destructive influence of sectarianism there. He viewed religion as:

> an obvious kick-back for the punk scene, because it's something that every single person that's born and raised here, more or less, encounters … There is no other scene in the city … that would ridicule … religion and, like, local politicians better, I think, than the punk scene.

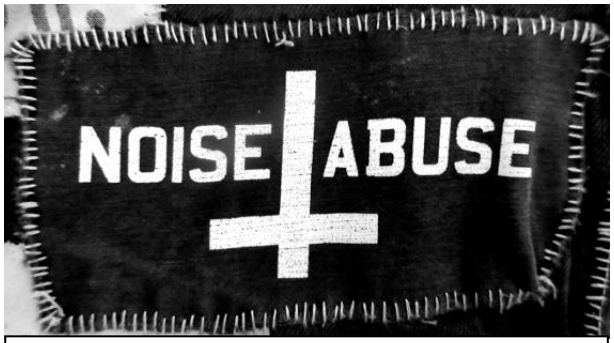

Fig. 5.29 – Noise Abuse, inverted cross patch, UK.

George also recalled 'a big furore' about a band called Emperor playing the 1in12 Club, an anarchist-punk social centre in Bradford, on the grounds that they 'were total Satanists.' So, in this instance, even religions often associated with certain alternative cultures are problematic – the issue is religiousness *per se* rather than any particular expression of it. With only two exceptions, the vast majority of interviewees in the UK were atheist, with attitudes to religion that ranged from uninterested agnosticism, to deeply felt anti-theism.

Fig. 5.30 – Detail from Infekcja, *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011).

In Poland the reaction to religion was far more hostile. Sonia described the Catholic church as the 'biggest mafia' and said, 'I'm personally an atheist … I think that punk in general is anti-church, and it is a lot in Poland.' Artur backed this up when he said, 'the vast majority of this scene were like really anti-church.' Paulina laughed when asked if she or any of her squatter housemates were religious, and said, 'none of us is religious … We're of course in the antagonist position … attacking [the] church, not only for … this cultural … hegemony, but also because the church is also an economic power.' Mateusz recounted attempts to open an

'Apostasy Office' to facilitate people wishing to officially leave the Catholic Church.[43] Adrian expressed a vehement dislike for the Church: 'we hate the fucks. When the Polish pope [John Paul II] died we were drinking for three days, and I was never so happy in my life.' Rafa suggested that if anyone in the punk scene were to reveal themselves as a member of the Church they would be likely to be shunned or expelled: 'it's like "fuck, you're a Catholic? What the fuck?" y'know, "we hate god here, we hate church and we hate everything what is connected with this shit."' *None* of the interviewees in Poland expressed any religious sympathy whatsoever. Most laughed at the suggestion of a relationship between punk and religion in Poland and expressed deep antipathy towards the Catholic Church in particular.[44]

Fig. 5.31 – Detail from Baraka Face Junta, *S/T*, (Trująca Fala, Nikt Nice Nie Wie, 2010).

This paints a very clear picture of punk as antagonistic to religion, at least as far as Western contexts are concerned, making the situation in Indonesia even more interesting.

Fig. 5.32 – Detail from Baraka Face Junta, *S/T*, (Trująca Fala, Nikt Nice Nie Wie, 2010).

[43] This obviously has symbolic significance, but also carries material importance because the Catholic Church claims 90% of Polish citizens as members, which justified the 89 million złoty (€21.4 million) paid yearly into the 'Church fund' by the Polish state from tax incomes. ('Polish government proposes radical changes to Church funding,' *Radio Poland* website, (15th March 2012), http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/93341,Polish-government-proposes-radical-changes-to-Church-funding [accessed 29th November 2015]). Since 2014 Polish citizens have been able to allot 0.5% of their income tax to the Catholic Church, or other religious organisation. ('Poland reaches compromise over new funding scheme for church,' *The Warsaw Voice Online*, (22nd February 2013), http://www.warsawvoice.pl/WVpage/pages/article.php/23834/news [accessed 29th November 2015]) The interviews were carried out before this change took effect, so it is unclear what impact this has had for apostasy campaigns.

[44] This contrasts sharply with Nicholas Jay Demerath III's suggestion of 'a common syndrome of … "cultural Catholicism"' in Poland. Nicholas Jay Demerath III, 'The Rise of "Cultural Religion" in European Christianity: Learning from Poland, Northern Ireland, and Sweden,' *Social Compass*, vol. 47, no. 1, (2000), pp. 127-139

- **Religion and punk in Indonesia**

'Shariah don't like it.'[45]

As noted in the introduction to this case study focus, the religious impact on Indonesian society is felt particularly keenly by punks. This was evident even at the Subhumans gig in Bandung – particularly noticeable in the procurement of beer. A small refrigerated cart had been set up to one side of the earth embankment, selling large bottles of Bintang and Anker (the ubiquitous lagers of Indonesia). It was assumed that its location was out-of-the-way to prevent being knocked over, or to be near a power supply. In fact, it was being hidden. This became apparent after the cart ran dry and it became necessary to make a short journey to a local shop to find some more beer. Even though at that time it was entirely legal to purchase alcohol in Bandung, it had to be acquired surreptitiously (the law on this has now changed, as discussed below) – in this case it was necessary to approach an assistant in a particular shop, who then prised-off the skirting boards under the fridge to produce the alcohol. This absurd awkwardness is a minor symptom of the fear instilled by religious fundamentalists, most notably the FPI (*Front Pembela Islam* or Islamic Defenders Front), who mete out violent retributions to anyone breaking Shariah law, such as selling or consuming alcohol, breaking fast during Ramadan, but also against anyone deemed 'leftist,' and frequently against punks.

As will be discussed further, many of the respondents were punk *and* Muslim, but held these two spheres as being separate in a kind of personal dualism. One purported example of a synthesis between Islam and punk is Taqwacore.[46] However, the significance of this engagement is seriously overstated in academic and journalistic circles. *The Taqwacores* began life as a work of fiction by Michael Knight, who had gone to study at a Pakistani madrassa at the age of seventeen in an act of rebellion against his white-supremacist American father.[47] Half a dozen or so bands took the 'Taqwacore' mantle from fiction to reality, resulting in these bands getting together with Knight to tour in the US and Pakistan for a documentary film.[48] However, Taqwacore never really constituted

[45] It must be confessed that the quote with which this section opens is a mondegreen of 'Rock the Casbah' by the Clash. The lyric is actually 'The *Shareef* don't like it' (The Clash, 'Rock the Casbah,' *Combat Rock*, (CBS, 1982)) in reference to Ayatollah Khomeini banning rock and disco music in Iran after the 1979 revolution. Despite the misinterpreted line, the issue of religious proscription which inspired this song provides just one example among numerous others of the antagonistic attitude to religion that is ordinarily expressed by punk.
[46] For an interesting analysis of the Taqwacore phenomenon, see: Anthony T. Fiscella, 'From Muslim punks to taqwacore: an incomplete history of punk Islam,' *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 6, no. 3, (2012), pp. 255-281
[47] http://www.taqwacore.com/ [accessed 29th November 2015]
[48] *Taqwacore: the birth of punk Islam*, Omar Majeed (dir.), (2009)

a 'scene' as such, and only really existed as media hype[49] and for the purposes of the documentary. As Imran Malik of a 'Taqwacore band' called the Kominas says, 'it was fabricated and forced by someone who was trying to sell a narrative, a sexy narrative. Since then, a lot of those bands have either ceased to exist, or said they're not Taqwacore after all.'[50] I mentioned Taqwacore to a number of interviewees in Indonesia, and though some of them had heard of individuals who attempted to synthesise punk and Islam in this way, none of them knew any of these people personally and did not know of any Taqwacore bands in any scenes that they were aware of. In fact, the relationship between Islam and punk in Indonesia is far more interesting than the bodged synthesis that Taqwacore represents.

- *Religion in Indonesia*

The 2010 Population Census[51] in Indonesia found that, of a population of nearly 240 million, 87.18% were Muslim, 6.96% Christian (i.e. Protestant), 2.91% Catholic, 1.69% Hindu, 0.72% Buddhist, 0.50% Confucian, with 0.51% identified as 'Others.'[52] The massive dominance of Islam (mostly Sunni) is immediately apparent, but so too is the small number of recognised religions – just six. In fact, the Indonesian state recognises *only* these religions, which makes it essentially unlawful to practice any religion other than these, or to be an atheist. Religion is present in every aspect of the state's functions, to the extent that each person's religion is stated on the Indonesian National ID Card. The centrality of religion is enshrined in the '*Pancasila*' founding principles of the Indonesian state, the first statement of which is 'Belief in the one and only God' (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*). Even more stringently, the definition of religion accompanying the 2010 census information is 'belief in Almighty God that *must be possessed by every human being*.'[53] This has repressive consequences for unrecognised religions and atheists. For example, Alex Aan was imprisoned for two-and-a-half years

[49] According to Imran Malik of the Kominas, the *Newsweek* website published an article about a band called Secret Trial Five before they had even written a song. He says, '[t]his was probably one of the most documented and interviewed scenes out there, and it wasn't even authentic.' (Interviewed in 'How Islamic punk went from fiction to reality,' Sanjiv Bhattacharya, *The Guardian*, (4th August 2011), http://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/aug/04/islamic-punk-muslim-taqwacores [accessed 29th November 2015])

[50] Bhattacharya, 'How Islamic punk went from fiction to reality'

[51] From the Indonesian Population census, 2010, carried out by Badan Pusat Statistik. Detailed breakdown of information on religion available at: http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=0 [accessed 29th November 2015]

[52] This includes other religions, not stated and not asked.

[53] http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=0, [emphasis added]. The emphasis on monotheism provides the grounds to repress Indonesia's indigenous animist religions, such as Dayak Kaharingan.

in 2012 for posting 'God doesn't exist'[54] on a social media website and 'stating that he was a member of the Minang atheist Facebook group.'[55] He was charged with blasphemy and encouraging others to embrace atheism[56] and initially faced a jail sentence of up to eleven years. He was also fined 100 million Rupiah (£5071.24), beaten by inmates while awaiting trial in prison in Padang, 'rejected by his community and endured public calls for his beheading.'[57] According to Andreas Harsono, one of Aan's lawyers, there has been a noticeable shift in public and state attitudes to religion in Indonesia in recent years: 'The situation is getting crazy … We used to discuss these issues. Now there is no discussion. The discourse today is "This is un-Islamic and immoral."'[58] Indeed, groups of violent Islamic fundamentalists, such as the high-profile FPI,[59] have been increasingly influential. In 2012 a sold-out Lady Gaga concert in Jakarta was cancelled after the FPI issued threats to Lady Gaga and her fans. After the concert was cancelled Salim Alatas, an FPI leader, said, '[t]his is a victory for Indonesian Muslims … Thanks to God for protecting us from a kind of devil.'[60] In 2013 another group of Islamic fundamentalists, Hizbut Tahrir, staged protests against the Miss World beauty pageant, with the Indonesian Ulema Council declaring a fatwa against the event, and the FPI pledging to disrupt the pageant if it went ahead,[61] forcing the organisers to move the event from Jakarta to the island of Bali (which is predominantly Hindu, and largely tourist oriented). The FPI was 'initially subsidised by the military and police as part of a street-level militia,'[62] and still functions with a degree of legal impunity, since 'law enforcement officers … in most cases [do] nothing to protect the victims.'[63] In an even more explicit example of the repressive combination of religion and state, Aceh province in the north of Sumatra has since 2001 (with an

[54] Kate Hodal, 'Indonesia's atheists face battle for religious freedom,' *The Guardian*, (3rd May 2012), http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/03/indonesia-atheists-religious-freedom-aan [accessed 29th November 2015]
[55] 'Atheist Alexander Aan gets [out] of prison,' *Jakarta Post*, (31st January 2014), http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/01/31/atheist-alexander-aan-gets-prison.html#sthash.HcbPqkZL.dpuf [accessed 29th November 2015]
[56] Under 'Article 28(2) of the Electronic Information and Transaction Law for disseminating information aimed at inciting religious hostility and Criminal Code articles 156a(a) and 156a(b).' ('Atheist Alexander Aan gets [out] of prison,' *Jakarta Post*)
[57] Hodal, 'Indonesia's atheists face battle for religious freedom'
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ian Wilson describes the FPI: 'Established in 1998 … mobilised against the student-led reform movement, the FPI has now for over 15 years expressed "alarm" and outrage at liberal democracy, representing it as a threat to Islamic practice and belief.' In 'Resisting Democracy: Front Pembela Islam and Indonesia's 2014 Elections,' *ISEAS Perspective*, no. 10, (2014), p. 2
[60] 'Lady Gaga cancels Indonesia show after threat from Muslim extremists,' (Associated Press article), *The Guardian*, (27th May 2012), http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2012/may/27/lady-gaga-indonesia-cancel-muslim [accessed 29th November 2015]
[61] 'Indonesians protest over Miss World contest,' (Associated Press article), *The Guardian*, (5th September 2013), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/05/indonesia-protests-miss-world [accessed 29th November 2015]
[62] Wilson, 'Resisting Democracy,' p. 2
[63] Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 189

expansion of powers in 2009) enforced aspects of Shariah law with a dedicated 'civil' police force.[64] Punishments usually involve public caning (up to forty strokes[65]) in venues such as the specially erected stage on the football pitch in the middle of Banda Aceh city. 'Civil offences' include: tattoos, gambling, sale and consumption of alcohol, men wearing shorts, 'illicit relations' between men and women, 'homosexual conduct,' as well as sexist prohibitions on women being seen in public without hijab, a ban on unaccompanied women leaving their homes after sunset, and most recently a ban on female passengers straddling motorbikes (as discussed in case study (a), above).[66] But state-enforced religious repression is not limited to traditionally conservative areas like Aceh. In April 2015 a ban was introduced on the sale of alcohol by small shops, affecting all of Indonesia (though with some concessions for Bali's tourist areas), while at the same time Islamic political parties 'proposed a total ban on drinking.'[67] The Human Rights Watch NGO recently highlighted the continuing practice of forcing female police recruits to undergo 'virginity tests'[68] across Indonesia. And as Andre Vltchek points out, the religious interference into the state often has popular support, even among young people in metropolitan areas. He writes that '[a] 2008 survey[69] conducted by the SETARA Institute for Democracy and Peace in Bekasi, Depok and Tangerang showed that 56 per cent of the young people in Greater Jakarta supported the sharia-based laws.'[70] The influence of religion in Indonesia extends beyond the functions of the state into all areas of society and culture. A major factor in this is that the only affordable educational institutions for most people are the madrassas (Islamic schools, often funded by fundamentalist Saudi Arabian Wahhabists), but, as Vltchek argues: 'it comes at the price of religious indoctrination.'[71] Vltchek also points out that '[f]or many

[64] The enforcement is limited to Muslim citizens, though non-Muslims are expected to show respect to Shariah law in public. For example, tourists wearing shorts will be tolerated, while a local Muslim doing so would not. Before my arrival in Banda Aceh I was told by some people that my tattoos would not be a problem, while others recommended I keep them covered while in public. There are tourist areas of Aceh province where visitors can freely wear bikinis and so on, while local Muslim women are expected to bathe in the sea while fully clothed, including hijab.

[65] For a detailed explanation of the provisions and implementation of Shariah law in Aceh, see Edward Aspinall, 'The Politics of Islamic Law in Aceh,' paper given to Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting 22nd-25th March 2007, Boston

[66] 'Indonesian province moves to ban women from straddling motorbikes,' (Associated Press article), *The Guardian*, (7th January 2013), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/07/indonesia-aceh-ban-women-motorbikes [accessed 29th November 2015]

[67] 'Indonesia bans sale of beer in small shops,' (Agence France-Presse article), *The Guardian*, (16th April 2015), http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/16/indonesia-bans-beer-sales-small-shops [accessed 13th March 2016]

[68] Hodal, 'Female Indonesian police recruits forced to undergo "virginity tests"'

[69] SETARA Institute (Institute for Democracy and Peace), '*Toleransi dalam Pasungan: Pandangan Generasi Muda Terhadap Masalah Kebangsaan Pluralisme dan kepemimpinan Nasional*' (Tolerance in confinement: Young generations view of the problems of nationhood, pluralism and national leaderships), (June 2008)

[70] Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 87

[71] Ibid. p. 185. Interviewee Nadya noted the influence of religion in education: 'We learn it at school… these institutions keep telling us that we must be religious ... pray blah blah blah instead of respect[ing] each other and humanity.' (E-mail exchange with interviewee Nadya, 25/02/2015)

Indonesians, mosques are the only available places of social and public gathering.'[72] Religion is deeply engrained into the social fabric of Indonesian life, as well as being enforced by law, and promoted by vigilante fundamentalists such as the FPI. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the influence of religion on society has had a massive impact on punk scenes in Indonesia.

- *Religious repression of punk in Indonesia*

Ian Wilson argues, with justification, that 'Indonesia has … one of the largest and most diverse punk scenes in the world.'[73] But punks in Indonesia have been at the sharp end of state and religious repression in recent years, and indeed, the globally reported events of December 2011 in Banda Aceh were the catalyst for the research undertaken there as part of this PhD.[74] As discussed above, Aceh enforces Shariah law,[75] and the civil police in Banda Aceh considered a punk gig being held there to be an offence, despite official permissions having been obtained. The abduction and torture of 64 punks actually had a precedent in Aceh in the form of *razia jibab* (hijab raids), which 'involved vigilante-type actions by groups of youths who captured and lectured uncovered women. Very often, the crowds abused the women they

Fig. 5.33 – Detail from *Aceh Revolution* compilation, (Rusty Knife Records, Guerilla Vinyl, Folklore De La Zone Mondiale, Keponteam, Svoboda Records, Ronce Records, 2013).

[72] Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 185
[73] Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk,' p. 1
[74] The international support campaigns for the punks abducted in Banda Aceh were numerous. A compilation CD called *Aceh Revolution* was released by bands and labels from across Europe. In the US, Aborted Society records launched the 'Mixtapes for Aceh' campaign, encouraging punks to send CD-Rs to the area (http://abortedsociety.com/2011/12/mixtapes-for-aceh/ [accessed 13th March 2016]). Also in the US, the Punk Aid group, in association with Movement Records in Jakarta, put out a benefit release (http://punkaid.bandcamp.com/album/punk-aid-aceh-calling [accessed 13th March 2016]). There were also protests at the Indonesian embassies and consulates in London and LA, and the Indonesian embassy in Istanbul was attacked and daubed with graffiti by Turkish punks (video of the action online here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dXrG0Rlrwg [accessed 13th March 2016]).
[75] Edward Aspinall argues that, even though Aceh is a particularly observant Muslim area, the extension of Shariah laws was in fact a tactic to undermine support for the local separatist movement GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or Free Aceh Movement). He writes that Shariah law's 'enshrinement in state policy must be seen above all as the product of strategic calculations made by elite actors in pursuit of their own interests, in the context of a violent conflict about identity and national belonging.' (Aspinall, 'The Politics of Islamic Law in Aceh,' p. 5)

caught; in the worst instances they cut the hair of those accused of being sex-workers, and of transsexuals.' And '[f]rom 2001, the ordinary police began to carry out *razia jilbab* of their own, lecturing uncovered women and providing them with free [hijab] as part of the "educative" approach.'[76] International human rights organisations were critical of the abduction of the punks, but the Banda Aceh authorities were bullishly proud of their actions. The photos that emerged of the abduction were not taken by intrepid human rights journalists, they were taken *and published* by the authorities themselves. According to Wilson, Deputy Governer Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal insisted that:

> the raid was necessary and would be repeated as punk constituted a 'new social disease,' a manifestation of degenerative foreign culture that was polluting Acehnese youth. She added that punk was in conflict with the Islamic and cultural traditions of Aceh and Indonesia, and hence must be 'eliminated.'[77]

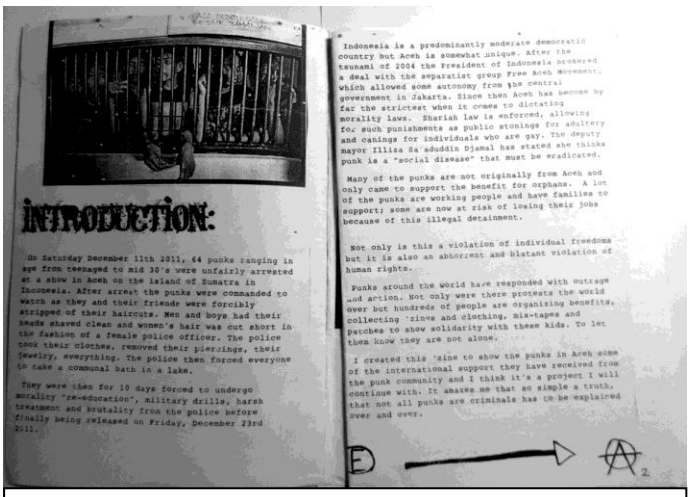

Fig. 5.34 – Pages from 'Free Aceh Punx' zine, Bandung, January 2012. Image of punx in jail cell, visible top left.

Inspector General Hasan, the Banda Aceh Police Chief, echoed the sense of religious duty behind the abduction: 'We're not torturing anyone … We're not violating human rights. We're just trying to put them back on the right moral path.'[78] Susanto and Ridwan, interviewees from Medan, were subjected to the ten day internment. They said the authorities 'do not understand about our lifestyle, our music … They do not want to accept us … they do not accept that there are punks in Aceh, they just do not accept.'[79]

[76] Ibid. p. 8
[77] Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk,' p. 1. President Sukarno himself likened rock 'n' roll to a 'mental disease' five decades earlier. Ibid. p. 2 – a clip of an interview with the US television network CBS, where Sukarno makes this comment, is available online here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKKF8-RgjzU [accessed 22nd April 2015]. In it he also suggests cutting the Beatles' hair, in a premonition of the eventual fate of punks in Aceh and elsewhere.
[78] 'Hard-line Indonesian police shave punkers' Mohawks,' (Associated Press article), *Hurryiet Daily News*, (14th December 2011), http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/hard-line-indonesian-police-shave-punkers-mohawks-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=9195&NewsCatID=356 [accessed 29th November 2015]
[79] Interview conducted 04/10/2012

Just a few months after this incident, reports emerged of two punks being caned in Banda Aceh after being apprehended by the Shariah police for 'pre-marital sex.' Matt Brown of ABC Radio Australia was present at the public caning and noted: 'what caught my eye wasn't the public humiliation or corporal punishment, it was the fact the pair were dubbed "punks" by the official in charge.'[80] Being punk is *officially* recognised as transgressive. An interviewee in Banda Aceh, Teuku, added that the Governor and Deputy Governor (a brother and sister duo) also had political motivations for targeting punks. It was, said Teuku, 'just a tactic, or a trick, of the governor or the deputy to attract the society,' ahead of elections happening early in 2012 – *and they were both re-elected*. The authorities' perception of punk as a 'social disease' is also widely held by the people of Banda Aceh. After explaining the purpose of my visit to some Acehnese university students, I was told that it was a good thing I was there because I could 'help these young criminal punks back to a good life.'[81] Handoko, an interviewee from Tangerang, had also been among those abducted. He said, 'Aceh's society were shocked by this kind of way of life, even though punks in Aceh didn't make something to worry them. They just look on us as a social disease on a religious city.'[82] The influence of religion extends across society, so that religiously motivated repression of punks is actually a vote-winner for the authorities in Banda Aceh.

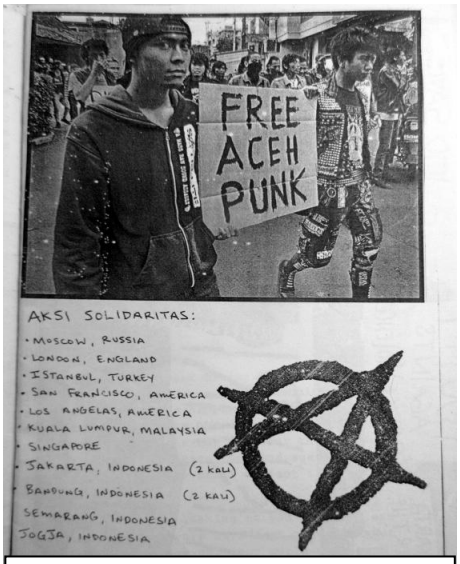

Fig. 5.35 – List of solidarity actions and protests for the abducted punx in Aceh, in 'Free Aceh Punx' zine, Bandung, January 2012.

However, as Wilson notes: 'harassment of punk has not been an isolated occurrence, or one confined to Aceh, with anti-punk raids being commonplace in cities throughout the country.'[83] Several interviewees discussed instances where the FPI had attacked punks. Zaqi, who was interviewed in Bandung but formerly lived in the more religious city of Yogyakarta,[84] recalled 'caliphists … sweeping … [to find] who have the mohawk, and cut the mohawk [with a machete] … They cut the mohawk because of religion.' Farid Budi Fahri, senior FPI member and 'purported

[80] Matt Brown, 'No anarchy in Aceh, Indonesia cracks down on punks,' *ABC Radio Australia*, (7th May 2012), http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/2012-05-07/no-anarchy-in-aceh-indonesia-cracks-down-on-punks/939342 [accessed 29th November 2015]
[81] Donaghey, *Goreng Crazy*, p. 19. This may have been something of a politely worded warning, since my own aesthetic was clearly punk, even if somewhat 'toned down' during my time in Aceh.
[82] Interview conducted 25/09/2012
[83] Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk,' p. 1
[84] Yogyakarta has administrative status as a Special Region, and uniquely retains the pre-colonial role of a Sultan, who acts as governor.

Islamic music[85] "expert"' said in 2011 that 'the underground community' had launched a 'war' against Islam. According to the Jakarta Post, he 'went on to speculate that the underground music community … has been subverted by the Zionist movement to spread ideas that would contradict Islam.' He said, '[t]he conspiracy is within the music, the lyrics which carry messages and the ideology which would create a lifestyle and counter culture.' He also discussed the FPI's efforts 'to approach punk communities … so that they can return to the true Islamic teachings,' and said that the FPI would 'expand its anti-underground initiatives.'[86] In July 2012, a group of around 30 FPI members raided the Prapatan Rebel distro in Bandung, tearing down and confiscating banners featuring pentagrams, which the distro used as its logo. Soirin Ahmad Abdullah, Chairperson of the Advisory Board of the FPI, defended the action as spontaneous, and said it was justified since the pentagram symbol is 'the Jewish label.'[87] This points to the anti-Western sentiment that also informs religious repression of punk. Interviewee Gilang noted: 'the religion is in all places in Indonesia, like … fanatic[al] … They refuse everything about West[ern] culture.' And Mr. Hostage identified 'punk [as] a Western culture, which is something new in here in Indonesia.' In a post-colonial context, the rejection of a punk as an element of 'Western culture' is potentially very powerful (although Indonesian punk has its own indigenous expressions). However, many of the cultural attachments to Islam in Indonesia are influenced by the Middle East, so are no more indigenous than punk, though as interviewee Nadya noted, this is not necessarily recognised by many Indonesian people:

> Many people don't understand how it is actually … like Islam[ic] people in Indonesia [going around] dressed like Arabs … with beards, something [on] their head … They think that all things Arab is [a] Muslim thing … They've never been in Arab [countries] … Indonesians

[85] The Indonesian interpretation of Islamic doctrine on music in general appears to be relatively relaxed. For example, Dina Torkia, a popular Muslim blogger and hijab designer from the UK, was shocked to see Muslim women there singing in public, something she considered *haram*, in her programme for the BBC 'Muslim Beauty Pageant and Me,' http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05n2fn7 [accessed 13th March 2016]. A stricter Islamic attitude to music is expressed by Seyyed Hossein Nasr: 'Islam has banned music which leads to the forgetfulness of God and forbidden those Muslims from hearing it who would become distracted from the spiritual world and become immersed in worldliness through listening to music.' ('Islam and Music. The Views of Rûzbahân Baqlî, the Patron Saint of Shiraz,' *Studies in Comparative Religion*, vol. 10, no. 1, (winter 1976), [not paginated])

[86] Irawaty Wardany, 'FPI sets its eyes on underground music,' *The Jakarta Post*, (21st March 2011), http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/03/21/fpi-sets-its-eyes-underground-music.html [accessed 29th November 2015]

[87] Baban Gandapurnama, 'FPI Akui Spontanitas Sobek Spanduk Distro Prapatan Rebel,' *detikNews*, (18th July 2012), http://news.detik.com/read/2012/07/18/155557/1968584/486/fpi-akui-spontanitas-sobek-spanduk-distro-prapatan-rebel [accessed 29th November 2015]

> misunderstand that … Here, if you speak Arab[ic] ... people would say 'amen' because they would think [it] is a prayer or bless[ing].[88]

Despite the huge raft of recent concessions, religious political elements do not get a totally free hand in Indonesian legislation – there have even been limited attempts to curb the power of the FPI (ironically, in the form of 'anti-anarchy' laws, discussed below). While fundamentalist Islam remains extremely influential, increasingly so in fact, there are elements of Indonesian society that seek to maintain some separation of religion and state.

Whatever the subtleties around clerical influence over the state, religion can still be identified as the predominant justification for repression of punk in Indonesia. Wilson writes that the 'recent upsurge in anti-punk raids and attendant criminalisation of punk identity is a familiar government reaction to the adoption of oppositional identities by regular targets of its intervention: street kids and poor urban youth.'[89] In May 2012, Wilson joined a number of 'senior' Jakarta punks, to meet with 'state officials in the Department of Social Affairs (Depsos) to discuss the anti-punk raids. The meeting confirmed government's *deeply entrenched misunderstandings* of what punk is and stands for.'[90] Dominic Berger's impression is 'that punks are at most seen as recalcitrant youths … not something that is "political" or a threat to the state.'[91] Indeed, while there exists a definite taboo against leftist politics in Indonesia,[92] punk's primary political companion, anarchism, is fundamentally misunderstood by the state. Berger, who researches aspects of Indonesian state repression, informed me that Indonesian police have 'very little to no knowledge about anarchism as a political concept.'[93] The extent of their misunderstanding of anarchism was indicated in March

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[88] E-mail exchange with interviewee Nadya, 25/02/2015

[89] Wilson, 'Indonesian Punk,' p. 4

[90] Ibid. [emphasis added]. Wilson continues: 'For their part, Marjinal resolved to engage with the public more, in order to counter misrepresentations of punk. They accepted requests to appear on TV and in the print media, articulating an interpretation of punk as a set of principles concerned with inherent rights to freedom of expression, social justice, solidarity and mutual assistance, both universal and distinctly Indonesian. Punk is, they argue, not a closed scene but open to all who share these values and vision. Within the broader punk community this has sparked heated debate with some arguing that engagement with the mainstream will ultimately trivialise and co-opt punk, and that explanation could appear as being apologist. Others felt that if punk was to remain a threat, as it should, then state retaliation was to be expected, even embraced.' (Ibid.)

[91] E-mail exchange with Dominic Berger, 14/01/2014

[92] Dominic Berger notes that 'Marxist ideology and symbols associated with the former Communist Party (PKI) continue to be banned,' in the abstract to a seminar given at Australia National University on 27th September 2013 titled 'Repression on the Cheap: responses to anti-state dissent in post-new order Indonesia.' http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/cap-events/2013-09-27/repression-cheap-responses-anti-state-dissent-post-new-order-indonesia#.UtTxVMiuFXU [accessed 29th November 2015]. This is a legacy of Suharto's seizure of power in 1965, which blamed the PKI for an attempted coup, then 'massacred an estimated five hundred thousand "leftists",' aided by the CIA (Katsiaficas, *Asia's Unknown Uprisings*, p. 345), and maintained an anti-communist propaganda campaign throughout his dictatorship. Andre Vltchek argues the upper estimate of those massacred is three million (Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 2).

[93] E-mail exchange with Dominic Berger, 14/01/2014

2011 with the creation of a new 'anti-anarchy' police division[94] to quell 'religious-based mob attacks'[95] and rioting by groups such as the FPI. As has already been made clear, the FPI are conservative Islamic fundamentalist zealots, not libertarian communists. Interviewee Mr. Hostage said that 'the religious communities in Bandung didn't have special problems with the anarchists or the atheists. They had problems with how punks dressed and tattooing and [that they] pierced their body.' So, in their preoccupation with the outwardly visible contraventions of Islamic doctrine, the authorities completely misunderstand punk. They fail to grasp punk's connections with anti-statist,[96] anti-capitalist and anti-religious politics – which might make more sensible grounds for repression, after all. For the state authorities punk is a social disease, an offence to Islam, and they repress it *in specifically religious terms*.

- *Muslim and punk (but not Muslim-punk) in Indonesia*

As stated, repression of punk in Indonesia is largely religiously motivated, whether in the form of the state authorities or the FPI, so it might be expected that Indonesian punks would be especially hostile to religion as a result. While some punks are openly atheist and anti-clerical (usually those engaged with anarchist politics and activism), the majority of punks interviewed in Indonesia described themselves as Muslim, and many attended mosque regularly. Interviewee Nadya, from Bandung, said, '[punk] guys here they go to the mosque for the Friday prayer and then they pray five times a day. Like it's normal for some people, it's just like [a] choice.' Surprisingly, attending mosque does not appear to create any special difficulty for (at least some) punks – Arief said that 'nowadays it is possible to pray in the mosque wearing punks' attributes' and Septian, who plays in a popular street-punk band in Jakarta, attends mosque in his punk attire. He said that people at the mosque are inquisitive but friendly: 'they want to know what is this, or they want to touch [my spiky hair].' The street punks in Banda Aceh, where religious oppression has perhaps been most fierce, said simply, 'if we're punk, and we pray, what's wrong with that?' This attitude was echoed by Teuku in Banda Aceh. He possessed several recent issues of *MaximumRockNRoll* zine, which generally espouses anarchist politics,[97] and on the walls of his room hung posters with anarchist

[94] Prosedur Tetap, Kepala Keplisian Negara Republik Indonesia, Nomor: Protap/1/X/2010, Tentang: Penanggulangan Anarki, (8th October 2010)
[95] Farouk Arnaz and Dessy Sagita, 'Plan for "Anti-Anarchy" Police,' *The Jakarta Globe*, (2nd March 2011), http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/archive/plan-for-anti-anarchy-police/ [accessed 29th November 2015]
[96] See: Pickles, 'Punk, pop and protest,' pp. 223-246
[97] This includes anarchist contributors to their regular columns (the CrimethInc. Ex-Workers Collective had a column during the mid-2000s for example) and frequent reviews of anarchist literature, in addition to the expected anarchist punk bands.

imagery and radical slogans.[98] But alongside these hung a large portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini, about whom the Clash had sung in 'Rock the Casbah.' I perceived this as something of a contradiction, but when I asked Teuku about it he replied that his uncle had been a big fan of the Ayatollah[99] without further qualification, and without seeming to acknowledge my perplexity. Teuku responded to this particular point after reading a draft version of this chapter, saying:

> Well, it's kinda tough to renounce your religion here, people grow up with a staunch religious upbringing most of the time. For example, I actually have no religion, *have no God but I'm culturally … very Muslim*, I still do pray … five times a day, fasting during Ramadan. I do it for fun and I just succumb to these social pressures, but it's not as hard as it may seem. Religion is a big deal here, religion is very mainstream, perceived as natural and those [who] don't believe in one are very much like social pariahs. Even being a godless like me might get a death threat or expelled, as you have known [in] the case about Aan Alexander for being an atheist.[100]

This emphasis on being *culturally* Muslim is key, as will be discussed below, but for many of the interviewees in Indonesia, punk rubbed alongside religiousness and was accepted as normal.

However, this is not to say that the adoption of the label 'Muslim' is unproblematic for Indonesian punks, and indeed, many interviewees offered substantial qualification. Some interviewees made an effort to distinguish their religiousness from the actions of the FPI and other fundamentalist mobs. Hengki and Yandi, from Medan, said that groups such as the FPI 'use a religion as a shield. But religion isn't like that. Islam isn't like that. It's just them using the politics … They were just using the situation, because they actually want a cash, money … They use religion to make themselves look stronger.'[101] Dimas in Jakarta shared this perspective:

> [The FPI] act brutal, they do not consider about the religion … they act brutal, it's not the religion. The religion is not teaching brutality, but they do the brutality behind religion's

[98] Including a gig poster that featured an anarchist flag and an arm throwing a Molotov cocktail, and a poster for an Indonesian rap group which imitated the Crass aesthetic of image collage surrounded by stencil-text slogans. The image included the faces of Gramsci, Marx, and Nietzsche, and the slogans around the edge read: 'Organize your community,' 'Whoever they vote for we are ungovernable,' 'Empower your surrounding,' 'Join the resistance: live life to the fullest.' The combination of Marxist, autonomist, situationist, anarchist and anarcho-punk themes, if not particularly coherent, points to radical politics in general.
[99] Donaghey, *Goreng Crazy*, p. 18
[100] E-mail exchange with interviewee Teuku 01/03/2015, [emphasis added]
[101] Interview conducted 04/10/2012

> name. But actually, they work for the government y'know, they're actually just a seal for their power. That's it.[102]

Similarly, Andre Vltchek notes that 'whenever religious cadres commit a crime, it is almost always labelled as "thuggery", or something that is "hiding behind religion".'[103] Vltchek argues that this is because 'it is illegal to criticise religion in Indonesia.'[104] This prohibition must have inevitably influenced the interviewees' responses, but their main motivation, it seemed, was to defend their version of religious belief from the fundamentalism which has increasingly come to occupy Islam in Indonesia. This can even be seen in the song lyrics of Bandung-based band Disabled in 'They are not a Moslem,' in which they sing: 'You call it religion. Your movement is a crime … Is it call religion? Fuck! This is a bullshit. Is it call Islamic? Fuck! This is a crime.'[105] The CD inlay includes a note which explains that the song is about the FPI, criticising their violent conduct and their successful campaign to ban Lady Gaga from performing in Indonesia on the grounds that she is a devil-worshipper:

> Islamic Defenders Front is more suitable to be replaced with Islamic Destroyers Front … Are they too Islam or too stupid? Do they deserve the name of Islam? Rioting and destruction in the name of religion. In order not to be dragged into the legal system, they act in the name of religion. This is not Islam.[106]

So while Disabled speak out against the actions of the FPI and their ilk, they are not critical of Islam as such, rather seeking to rescue Islam from associations with fundamentalism.

Less qualified expressions of religiousness can be identified in a survey of some records, tapes and CDs released by Indonesian punk bands in the last few years. For example, Injakmati, a grind band from Tangerang, include explicitly religious sentiments in the thanks section of their *Rotten Conspiracy* 7". Three of the four band members thank 'god,' one of whom thanks no one else. One band member thanks 'Allah SWT' (an acronym of the Arabic phrase '*Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*' which roughly translated means 'the most glorified, the most high') but ends his list of thanks with 'Viva anarchy & revolution!'[107] echoing the dualism observed in Teuku's posters in Banda Aceh. Similarly, GunXRose thank 'Alloh SWT, and Rasulullah SWT' (Rasulullah is a synonym for the prophet

[102] Interview conducted 29/09/2012
[103] Vltchek, *Indonesia*, p. 186
[104] Ibid.
[105] Disabled, 'They Are Not A Moslem', *Curhat Colongan, Anjing!* (Curhat Colongan, Anjing! records, 2012)
[106] Disabled, *Curhat Colongan, Anjing!* (Curhat Colongan, Anjing! records, 2012), CD booklet [translated from Indonesian]
[107] Injakmati split 7" with Black Sister, *Rotten Conspiracy*, (Neverheard distro, Power Negi records, Problem records, Alcoholic Desaster, Subwix, Urgent Freedom, 2009), lyric sheet

Mohammed). *Unlike* the other bands mentioned, religion also extends into the lyrics of GunXRose, in the song 'Lenyapkan Zionis' which translates as 'Eliminate the Zionists.'[108] In this context, accompanied as it is by thanks to the Islamic god-head and prophet, the anti-Zionism takes on a religious/sectarian dimension strongly reminiscent of the FPI's obsession with 'Zionist conspiracies' against Islamic culture. While this was the only encountered example of religion making a direct influence on the music of punk bands in Indonesia, the propensity for bands to thank god, Allah, or Mohammed illustrates that many punks are actively *and publicly* religious. Interestingly, the *Kill Me With Your Lips* tape by Jakarta-based street punk legends Street Voices includes 'thanks' to 'everyone who support us, *who pray with us*, who work with us, who living with us, who watching us, who listening us, *who drunk with us*.'[109] Here the public display of religiousness is combined with a public contravention of Islamic doctrine, in the form of consuming alcohol – so even where punk and religion appear together this is not necessarily in a form that fulfils expected Islamic orthodoxies, and offers no easy synthesis.

Interviewees were very conscious of the potential disconnect between Islam and punk, and typically explained this in four ways: as something personal (so not open to further interrogation); as an unsynthesised dualism; as an expression of cultural religiosity; or as a result of severe social pressure to conform.

Mr. Hostage, who was interviewed in Jakarta, offered an analysis of the presence of religion in Indonesian punk:

> Because of the limitation of technology over here … they didn't have any idea that religion is like the opposite of punk. So, y'know they're still doing their conservative belief while doing their punk thing. And then slowly, by time changing it becomes a mix … So it's like finally they know punk perspective, a common punk perspective, about religion, but yet they still continue to do what they believe in because of their *personal reason*, y'know.

Mr. Hostage's idea of a 'mix' between religion and punk was largely contradicted by other interviewees, but the emphasis on 'personal reason' was a commonly repeated theme. For example, Putri in Bandung said, 'like the prayers and everything, that's just individual.' Agus and

[108] GunXRose, *Anti Dogmanisasi Berhala*, (Chey, Battleground, xTerkubur Hidurx, Pastimati, Alternaive, Teriak, Doombringer, Donttalk, 2012). Punk bands have included anti-Zionist lyrics as part of a wider critique of religion, and of the policies of the Israeli state in Palestine in particular. For example, Propagandhi's 'Haillie Sellasse Up Your Ass,' which has the lines 'Mount Zion's a minefield. The West Bank. The Gaza Strip. Soon to be parking lots for American tourists and fascist cops. Fuck Zionism. Fuck militarism. Fuck Americanism. Fuck nationalism. Fuck religion.' (Propagandhi, 'Haillie Sellasse Up Your Ass,' *How to Clean Everything*, (Fat Wreck, 1996))

[109] Street Voices, *Kill Me With Your Lips*, (Movement Records, 2010), tape inlay, [emphasis added]

Yohanes in Jakarta said religion 'comes down to [the] individual, [it's] personal.'[110] Dimas, perhaps expressing discomfort about my questioning on the subject, said that the issue should not be others' concern: 'it's not their business about my religion.' Total Anarchy[111] from Bandung, said religion is 'a matter of something inside our heart … not to be … socialised … Somebody could be what they want, or even if someone doesn't have religion … it's OK for us. What's important is we're not bothering each other.'[112] As Eka pointed out, even broaching the subject of religion in conversation is likely to cause offence in Indonesia: 'so many friends … they feel offended when you talk about this.' This perhaps go some way to explaining the 'it's personal' response – i.e. interviewees found the line of questioning offensive and wished to close down this avenue of interrogation. However, several interviewees also expressed a personal religiosity as distinct from belonging to a religious institution, such as a Mosque. The street punks in Banda Aceh said, '[y]es, we are [Muslim] … Sometimes, there many spots [missed prayers], but that's individual, it is really private, our relationship with One above … Having or not having religion, to me, is everyone's right.' The street punks in Tangerang said that even though they are criticised for having tattoos, 'it's not for human beings to judge, the Mighty one is, right?'[113] This personal interpretation of religion was repeatedly expressed in interviews with Indonesian punks, particularly in reference to the repression of punk by religiously motivated authorities and vigilantes. By emphasising a personal religiousness, the actions of religious institutions are presented as separate, much in the same way as other interviewees discussed above were at pains to distinguish their religiousness from that of the FPI.

Contrary to Mr. Hostage's perception of 'a mix,' a clear separation was held between religion and punk on the part of most of the interviewees. Septian in Jakarta said, 'some punks here still believe in religion … just for their self. They believe, but [it] is separated. This is punks [gestures left]. This is religion [gestures right]. You cannot put it in [together]. But they are still doing punk Indonesian y'know?' Total Anarchy said, 'we can separate when we need to play music, and when to talk about religion … It's unrelated: music – religion, religion – music … that's why [we] *never put them together*.'[114] The Banda Aceh street punks said, 'to me, there's no connection between punk and religion.' So, these interviewees are punk and they are Muslim, but they are not Muslim-punks or punk-Muslims (or 'Taqwacore'). Despite being religious they still consider religion incompatible with punk, holding them as distinct parts of their lives, and even as separate parts of themselves. As

[110] Interview conducted 29/09/2012
[111] Despite their band name, Total Anarchy share the authorities' misinterpretation of anarchism.
[112] Interview conducted 26/09/2012
[113] Interview conducted 25/09/2012
[114] [emphasis added]

discussed above, this dualism is not viewed as problematic by most Indonesian punks – despite recognising a contradiction, they feel no compulsion towards synthesis as a resolution.

Teuku said, '[y]eh, I'm Muslim,' but a few moments later also said 'to be honest I [was] never really religious,' and in response to my perception of a contradiction between the punk and religious imagery in his room he emphasised being *culturally* Muslim. Putri, likewise, discussed the cultural significance of religion, saying that even though:

> most of us usually have our own opinions about religion … then we still celebrate the religion … y'know from our parents kinda thing … Most of us still respect our parents, and go home, and stay … with them [during religious festivals], 'cause there's feast and celebration, that kinda thing.

Taufan, also from Bandung, agreed: 'Yeh it's like, when we grow up we just adopt the religion from our parents, it's already like automatic.' Mr. Hostage made a similar point: 'Religion over here is like almost a culture, so it's like, you've been taught this religion from childhood and all that.' Several of the interviewees described themselves as atheists (though they asked for direct attribution of expressions of atheism to be removed from the thesis), but traditions still hold huge social and cultural significance for them, even as these occasions are emptied of their 'religious' aspect.[115] As Demerath III notes, cultural religious affiliation:

> is less one of present conviction or commitment than of continuity with generations past and contrast with rival groups and identities … [I]dentity is pivotal to the phenomenon, for religion has always ranked with ethnicity, nationality, and social class as a salient marker of personhood.[116]

So a Muslim identity can be carried without any deep commitment to the religion – indeed, as discussed above, the state constantly emphasises religion in its functions, not least by stating each person's religion on the National Identity Card, so there is little space for any identity which does not fit around one of the six recognised religions.

This does not adequately explain why *so many* punks describe themselves as Muslim, and does even less to explain why punks are actively religious (attending mosque, praying, thanking Allah in CD inserts etc.) *despite* acknowledging that punk is essentially in opposition to religion. As discussed above (and also described in the footnotes here), the position of religion in Polish society is

[115] Though, of course, this is also true of Christmas in 'secular' Western states.
[116] Demerath III, 'The Rise of "Cultural Religion",' p. 136

ostensibly similar, with the massive dominance of one religion,[117] a church which wields significant influence over the state, and even vigilante attacks and violence being carried out with religious justification.[118] But religious influence in Poland leads the punks to more vociferous hostility, while in Indonesia this hostility appears to be absent in most cases. Religious pressure, both social and state, are a further reason given by Indonesian punks for their continued religious affiliations. Eka describes the extent of that pressure:

> If you don't have religion … [society is] gonna feel that, 'Aw, you're evil, you're immoral' … Since you're born [you] are raised in this kind of culture. And of course it's really hard to deal with that, because yeh, you['re] gonna deal with so many like moral punishments, social punishments from your surroundings if you talk about religion or you're against religion, or you criticise religion.
>
> So, if you say you don't live in a religion, or you say that you have sympathy for communism or communist idea, you're gonna deal with the same shit, like really, even you don't need cops to come to you, the people themselves will … [They] can do anything, whatever they want to you.
>
> Violence, like really even direct violence, starting from verbal to non-verbal violence and terror.

No interviewees in Poland or the UK reported anything even close to this level of religious social pressure, and the kind of attacks detailed elsewhere in this article are unparalleled in either the UK or Poland contexts. There was also a perception that punks who were not religious would eventually 'go back' to Islam. Eka said:

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[117] This was even the case under the Polish People's Republic (see: Karol H. Borowski, 'The Sociology of Religion in Modern Poland: A critical review,' *Sociological Analysis*, vol. 46, no. 4, (1985), pp. 389-399) and the Church's association with the opposition movement gave it huge influence in the post-Socialist era (see Demerath III, 'The Rise of "Cultural Religion",' pp. 127-139).

[118] Especially in the form of homophobic attacks, such as the burning down of a rainbow sculpture in Warsaw (Hanna Kozlowska, 'Rainbow Becomes a Prism to View Gay Rights,' *The New York Times*, (21st March 2013), http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/22/world/europe/in-warsaw-rainbow-sculpture-draws-attacks.html?_r=0 [accessed 29th November 2015]) and an attack against Poland's only openly gay MP after a gay pride parade (Corinne Pinfold, 'Poland's only gay MP attacked after Equality Parade,' *Pink News*, (17th June 2013), http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/06/17/polands-only-gay-mp-attacked-after-equality-parade/ [accessed 29th November 2015]). The Inequality Project documents the general attitude to homosexuality in Poland, referencing Polish Social Watch Report 2010, which found that '64% of respondents would refuse gay and lesbian organisations the right to public manifestations; the same percentage is opposed to public displays of affection by homosexual couples; 44% of respondents think that there are jobs that gays should not perform; and 36% of respondents apply the same rule to lesbians (mainly professions connected with children and medical care),' (*Polish Report Social Watch 2010. Overview*, R. Szarnferberg (ed.), http://www.kph.org.pl/pl/czytaj/raporty, as quoted by contributor 'Iwona,' at https://inequalityproject.wordpress.com/homophobia-in-eastern-europe/ [accessed 29th November 2015])

> I see lots of my old punk friends … maybe late 30s, and they start to get married, work in a normal way, live a normal life, and they always marry with the girl with the hijab.
>
> Most of them think that their life when [they were] still in the street, when they was still punk, it was a mistake. It's part of the wrong path that they took before, now they want to go back to the right path, that's why they start to go back to pray again.
>
> They consciously say 'I don't want to marry like punk girl, because they're the same as me, like filthy' and they think that if they went back to religion, their sins will be clear again.

This opens up issues around ageing in punk scenes,[119] and points to the sexist attitudes, discussed in case study focus (a), that are held by many punks in Indonesia, largely informed by religious patriarchal norms. But in terms of religion, it illustrates the pervasiveness of its influence, since even people who in their youth are somehow able to escape religious expectations succumb to these social and state pressures as they get older. As discussed above, the religious repression of punks on this scale is unimaginable in the contemporary UK or Polish contexts – it is a substantively different force in Indonesia, with the effect that the relationship between punk and religion is also *substantively* different.

- *Anarchist anti-theist punks in Indonesia*

Most of the punks interviewed in Indonesia described themselves as Muslim, and as such this complicated relationship has been focussed upon. However, a significant minority of interviewees described themselves as atheist or 'not religious.' This obviously constitutes an act of considerable bravery in Indonesia, quite distinct from professions of anti-theism in other parts of the world, including the UK and Poland.

Fig. 5.36 – Stickers in the window of InstitutA, Depok, including LGBTIQ imagery.

[119] See: Andy Bennett, 'Punk's Not Dead: The Significance of Punk Rock for an Older Generation of Fans,' *Sociology*, vol. 40, no. 1, (2006), pp. 219-235

Many of the interviewees who described themselves as atheists were also anarchists, though it is not possible for them to be identified here, even by their pseudonyms, because of the risks described. Some of these people were not affiliated to any particular group, such as one interviewee who said, 'I don't believe in religion, and so too their gods,' but many of them were involved in organised anarchist groups, for example the Bandung Pyrate Punx collective and InstitutA in Depok. As mentioned already, InstitutA, despite being located in one of the most religiously fundamentalist parts of the Greater Jakarta Area, have openly anti-theist literature in their library, LGBTQ stickers in their windows, and a large mural which criticises Islam on an outside wall. The mural features a blindfolded face with its mouth opened wide, with winged plates carrying a house, a car, a pile of books, and a mosque towards it. These plates are to symbolise various oppressive aspects of society, which are 'shoved down your throat,' but the inclusion of the mosque is notable, particularly since the infoshop has three mosques in very close proximity. An activist, who was formerly involved in the Jakarta punk scene, described religion as a 'creation of men to create conflict, to control people, to oppress people, to take benefit of other people in the sake of [an] afterlife,'[120] pointing to an explicitly anarchist atheism.

Fig. 5.37 – Mural at InstitutA, Depok.

As mentioned above, The Bandung Pyrate Punx's shared housing project 'Pirata House' goes against religious custom since unrelated, unmarried men and women sleep under the same roof. Additionally the poster for their eighth annual 'Libertad Fest' in 2015 proudly bore the slogan '8th years of no lords!' echoing the anarchist 'no gods, no masters' catechism. (The island on which the festival was held also had its Indonesian flag replaced with the anarchist red-and-black flag for the duration). Bands associated with Bandung Pyrate Punx, such as Krass Kepala and KontraSosial, also use anti-religious lyrics and imagery. For example, Krass Kepala's 'Arogansi Agama' ('Religious Arrogance') has the lyrics: 'stop religious arrogance that legalises violence against social activities,'[121] or KontraSosial's 'Religi Konsumsi' ('Religious Consumption') in which they sing: 'Prophet ad victim,

[120] Anonymous Interviewee

[121] Krass Kepala (live version), from the split 7" with Die Wrecked, *Solidaritas Internasional*, (Die Rex, Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Originally released on the *7 Pesan Pendek* EP (downloadable here: http://kidsattack.blogspot.co.uk/2010/02/krass-kepala-7-pesan-pendek.html), again on *Total Destruction*, (Disarmament records, 2009), and most recently (both live and studio versions) on *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015), [lyric translation from Indonesian]

wearing a Nike brand turban, our ad victims, religious propaganda.'[122] They critique religion and capitalist consumerism as mutually reinforcing phenomena, and in the explanatory note provided in the CD inlay they write: 'Ladies and gents, we introduce to you the CONSUMERISM RELIGION!!! Shopping is worship that guarantees you get to heaven.'[123] Zudas Krust, from Jakarta, pick up on Krass Kepala's attack on 'arrogant' religion in 'Perang Agama' ('Religious War') with the lyrics: 'High dose of arrogance, killing and intimidating, establishing their heaven. Never care about how much blood they spill. Religion war in the name of God.'[124] Also on the *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order* tape is 'God System Slavery' with the lyrics: 'No good deeds goes unpunished. Religion … religion … religion … for so long!!!'[125] Zudas Krust echo KontraSosial's two-pronged critique of consumerism and religion in 'Percepat Kiamat!' ('Hasten the Apocalypse!') with the

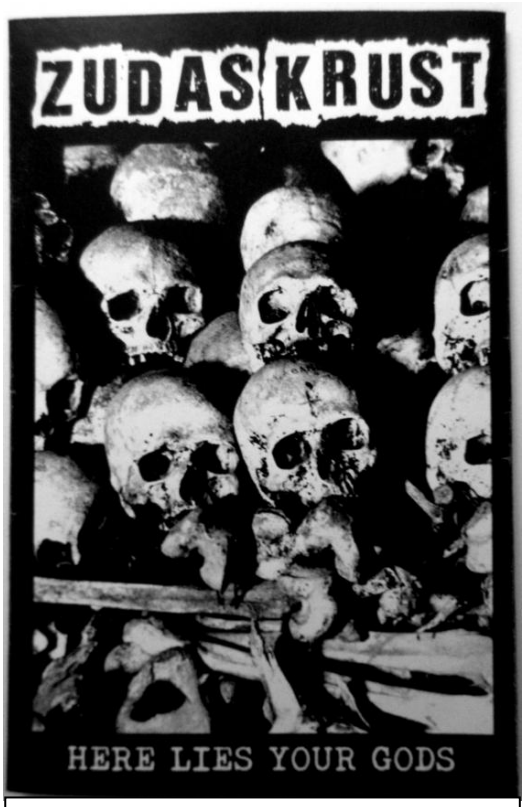

Fig. 5.38 – Zudas Krust, *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009).

Fig. 5.39 – Bandung Pyrate Punx bunting.

[122] KontraSosial, *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009), [translation from Indonesian]
[123] KontraSosial, *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009), [translation from Indonesian]
[124] Zudas Krust, 'Perang Agama,' *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011), [translation supplied in tape booklet]
[125] Zudas Krust, 'God System Slavery,' *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011), [translation supplied in tape booklet]

line: 'Wishing rewards from the idols [*sic*] tower, to be fast of the doomsday, God damn with heaven, if reward just shopping.'[126] The tape on which this song appears is titled *Here Lies Your Gods*, and the cover image features skulls in a mass grave, declaring a Nietzschean 'God is dead,' while also implicating religion in mass murder and genocide (similar to Crass's 'Asylum' in this regard). 'You Call It Moral' also appears on this tape, with the lyrics: 'It's "in the name of God" written on your forehead. Slashing and bashing, your moral fuelled with hate.'[127] Duct Tape Surgery, also from Jakarta, sing: 'Listen to what they're saying. Religion. Tell me what to believe in. Point of no return. I've lived for no reason,' on the song 'Fate.'[128] The artwork for KontraSosial's *Endless War* CD contains further anti-religious messages: the disc itself is circled with the words 'No Gods x No Masters x No Slavery x No Oppressions x' which points to the anarchist underpinning of their anti-theism; and also features a Madonna and child with their faces replaced by skulls, a revolver in the Madonna's hand, and rows of missiles forming angel wings behind her, conflating religious iconography with violence, war and death. Of course, the détourned Madonna and child is based on Christian iconography, with aesthetic similarity to punk bands in 'the West.' And indeed, the expressions of anti-religiousness are largely comparable to those encountered in the UK and Poland in rhetoric and aesthetic, and particularly in terms of their anarchist underpinning. The anarchist framework provides terms of reference to express this anti-theism in a context where the opportunity to do so is extremely limited. In Indonesia to speak out against religion is to risk your freedom and your life, so the individuals, bands, and collectives that do so have much more at stake, and are making a much bigger statement – and as a result is something that only a small number of people are willing to do openly.

Fig. 5.40 – KontraSosial, *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009).

Fig. 5.41 – Krass Kepala, *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015). Cover art parodies 'The Last Supper' with Jesus and the disciples replaced by skull-headed punx.

[126] Zudas Krust, 'Percepat Kiamat!' *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009), [translation supplied in tape booklet]
[127] Zudas Krust, 'You Call It Moral,' *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009), [translation supplied in tape booklet]
[128] Duct Tape Surgery, *Facing Problems*, (Stop 'n' Go, Time Up Records, 2012)

So, repression against punk is clearly much harsher in Indonesia, and the religious grounding of that repression is also distinct from the UK and Poland contexts, where punk is only recognised as a threat in its combination with anarchism, rather than on religious grounds. However, where anti-religiousness is encountered in Indonesian punk it is from an anarchist perspective, in common with the UK and Poland contexts – anarchism provides a framework and language for atheism in very difficult circumstances.

Fig. 5.42 – Mural at Syrena, Warsaw.

Case Study Focus C: Conclusion

The exploration of the three case study foci in the UK, Poland, and Indonesia has strengthened (and further complicated) the key assertions made in the case study introduction, above. The strong connections between punk and anarchism have been thoroughly detailed, with thick, rich description in these contexts. The key questions and tensions have also emerged strongly, and the ways in which these begin to unravel has also been raised. The final section of the thesis will address these key tensions in more theoretical detail, with a strong grounding in the heft of empirical weight provided by the case studies.


Fig. 5.43 – Black and red anarchist flag flutters in the breeze on Racun Island in the Java Sea.

CHAPTER 6 – DIY PUNK AND THE LIFESTYLIST VERSUS WORKERIST DICHOTOMY

The case studies have revealed an intriguing picture of the relationships between punk and anarchism in the contemporary contexts of the UK, Poland and Indonesia. Punk has been shown to be associated with a wide range of anarchist approaches and activisms – but there was an especial emphasis on anti-fascism, animal liberation/food sovereignty activism, and squatting. However, this understanding of a peculiar 'punk anarchism' was heavily qualified, with punk participants engaging in anarchist activisms from ecological activism, to prisoner support, to supporting industrial disputes, and were members of hunt saboteur groups, Food Not Bombs chapters, squatting collectives, anarcho-syndicalist unions and much more. Despite the nebulous definition of punk's relationships with anarchism, a tension was evident with pre-existing or 'traditional' anarchist groups and movements. This relationship with anarchism's 'old guard' will be explored in more detail here. The case studies also identified an apparent distinction on the part of some of the interviewees between so-called 'proper anarchism' and other anarchisms which are in some way fundamentally flawed. This was typically viewed in a dichotomous way: 'cultural activism' versus 'political activism'; 'political punk' versus 'a-political punk'; *'lifestylism' versus 'workerism.'* Harking back to the introduction and the initial spark for this research, punk is often found to be mired in the supposed opposition between workerist[1] and lifestylist anarchisms, denigrated or dismissed in its association with the latter. Lifestylists are described as punks as an accusation of class privilege, sub-culturalism, a ghetto mentality, and elitism.

So, as part of the wider exploration of the relationships between anarchism and punk, the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy emerges as being particularly poignant. Two anarchist groups that cropped-up repeatedly in the case studies are CrimethInc. and Class War, and despite both having close associations with punk, they are typically characterised as being at opposite poles of the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy (and in that order). It will be informative, then, to examine these groups more closely, especially in terms of their relationships to lifestylism, workerism, and punk. Not only does this significantly complicate the notion that punk is associated with lifestylism, it also brings into question the underlying assumptions of a clear dichotomy between lifestylism and workerism – or an 'unbridgable chasm' as Bookchin famously termed it.

[1] It should be noted here that the term 'workerism' is used in a specific (and derogatory) sense to describe a supposedly distinct approach *within* anarchism, as detailed in the caricature, rather than referring to the autonomist-Marxist *Operaismo* associated with, among others, Mario Tronti.

As will be described, one of the key criticisms of lifestylism is its propensity to be co-opted or recuperated by capitalism. As such, punk's relationship to capitalism is of particular interest – and draws in another key aspect of the case studies in the form of DIY ethics and production practices. Each of the case study foci (the UK, Poland, and Indonesia) began with a vignette of a DIY gig in that locality, and examined the dynamics of DIY punk in action, as described by the interviewees. This chapter will dig more deeply into the issues and tensions of DIY punk, and the implications of this for punk's placing across the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy. Ultimately it is argued that DIY punk cannot be understood properly within this supposed binary, and that the perceived opposition between lifestylism and workerism creates artificial barriers between currents of anarchism which are, in practical terms, intermingled and overlapping. The examination of DIY punk serves to collapse the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy altogether.

To conclude, the overarching theoretical framework of antinomy will again be made explicit, especially in terms of breaking down false dichotomies and the recognition of a spectrum of diverse tactics, approaches and philosophies within the anarchist family, rather than binarily opposed antagonisms.

Lifestylism, workerism, class and punk

Before considering the often rancorous debate around lifestylism and workerism, and punk's placing within that argument, it is necessary to explain what is meant by the terms 'lifestylist anarchist' and 'workerist anarchist' and punk's portrayal in relation to these terms. It should be stressed from the outset that these supposedly dichotomous poles are *caricatures*. 'Lifestylist' and 'workerist' are pejorative slurs that exaggerate differences in philosophy and tactics between various strands of anarchist activism. Despite depicting mere 'straw figures' they are often the terms of reference used in argument, so a *temporary* admission of the dichotomy serves to inform the wider exploration of the relationships between anarchism and punk. It is also the case that these terms draw together distinct philosophical strands – for example: Murray Bookchin's polemic against lifestylism, discussed in detail below, runs together subjectivism and lifestyle politics; while various distinct strands of class struggle anarchism (such as anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism) are lumped in together under 'workerism.' These terms are defined in opposition to one another, so that we best might describe 'workerism' as 'anti-lifestylism' and vice-versa. Inaccurate as they are, then, these are the labels which are applied within the frame of the debate, and they will be

explained here on the understanding that they are pejorative exaggerations (and on closer inspection, not much more than that).

Those arguing in favour of practices reflected in the lifestylist caricature often use the term 'lifestyle politics' or even 'lifestyle activism.'[2] Matthew Wilson describes lifestyle politics as 'the idea that social change can only occur if individuals begin to change their own lives – the way they think and the way the [*sic*] act.'[3] He argues that 'if we reject the system, then we need to begin rejecting the life it has created for us.'[4] Or as Laura Portwood-Stacer puts it: '[r]adical lifestyle politics reconfigures the everyday life of the individual into an ongoing struggle against domination.'[5] So, lifestyle politics seeks to build towards revolutionary change at the individual level beginning with 'self-emancipation'[6] as Murray Bookchin terms it (though Bookchin later argued against lifestylism, as will be discussed below). Further, it is argued that any revolutionary perspective or activity that fails to take lifestyle into account is incomplete and flawed. As Wilson writes: '[t]his is not the only way that social change must be created, but *it is a necessary element* of any profound and radical attempt to escape our current political economic, cultural and ethical status quo.'[7] So lifestylism doesn't make a claim to be the totality of revolutionary praxis but it does consider itself as fundamentally underpinning meaningful social change, and in addition to the economic realm, ethical and cultural aspects are of core concern. This is not intended as a tactic of 'personalistic retreat,'[8] but rather as Portwood-Stacer argues, contemporary activists are concerned with both lifestyle *and* critiques of capitalism and the state. This is because '[t]he conditions of the neoliberal consumer culture that have matured over the past two decades cultivate a climate in which lifestyle activism is a common-sense part of the path toward radical change.'[9] So lifestylism is a reaction to the changing face of capitalist society – new dynamics of oppression require new models of resistance. Many writers are also keen to stress lifestylism's anarchist pedigree: George McKay writes that 'the notion of subjective revolution has a lengthy tradition in the context of anarchism, the self being both that most problematic and celebrated of anarchist constructions';[10] and Sandra Jeppesen points out that 'pleasure and desire have always been important parts of the anarchist

[2] Laura Portwood-Stacer employs this term in *Lifestyle Politics and Radical Activism*, but the conflation of 'lifestyle' and 'activism' is contentious.
[3] Matthew Wilson, *Biting the Hand that Feeds Us. In Defence of Lifestyle Politics*, Dysophia Open Letter #2, (Leeds: Dysophia, 2012), p. 2, [emphasis added]
[4] Wilson, *Biting the Hand*, p. 4
[5] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 2
[6] Murray Bookchin, 'Post Scarcity Anarchism,' in *Contemporary Anarchism*, p. 265, quoted in Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 2
[7] Wilson, *Biting the Hand*, p. 2, [emphasis added]
[8] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 5
[9] Ibid.
[10] George McKay, 'DiY Culture: notes towards an intro,' in *DiY Culture*, pp. 20, 21

movement, ever since Emma Goldman said, "if I can't dance, it's not my revolution."'[11] So, lifestylism emphasises individual revolution and cultural activism, and the lifestylist concept of revolution is, as Benjamin Franks puts it: 'the accumulation of ever expanding and growing incidents of prefigurative anarchist actions.'[12]

Fig. 6.1 – Banner of Emma Goldman at the Klub Anarchistyczny at Rozbrat, Poznań.

DIY punk is often associated with lifestylist anarchism, and this perception has some grounding – perhaps as summed-up by *Profane Existence* zine: 'We have created our own music, our own *lifestyle*, our own community, and our own *culture* … Freedom is something we can create *everyday*; it is up to all of us to make it happen.'[13] However, as Sean Martin-Iverson notes, punk's association with lifestylism is critically viewed as 'a reduction of the class struggle tradition of social anarchism to a commodified "counter-cultural" identity.'[14] This lifestylist reading of punk is picked-up by Portwood-Stacer as well. She suggests that lifestylism and punk have concurrent and related geneses,[15] and that this association is a persistent one, and like Martin-Iverson identifies it as problematic:

> [T]he fact that many who became involved in punk scenes lacked a deep understanding of anarchist history or political philosophy meant that their enactment of anarchist principles could, at times, be fairly limited, remaining at the 'shallow' level of their individual lifestyle choices. This was what earned them the pejorative labels of lifestyle anarchist or lifestylist. Since that time, *lifestylism has retained its connotative associations with the anarchopunk* sector of the broad anarchist movement.[16]

Interviewee Artur in Poland identified this link in a critical sense as well:

[11] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' pp. 42, 43. This quote is very often misattributed to Goldman, though her philosophical stance is arguably reflected in it.
[12] Franks, *Rebel Alliances*, p. 261
[13] *Profane Existence*, no. 4, (June 1990), [emphasis added]
[14] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 10
[15] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 132
[16] Ibid. [emphasis added]

> It's a classical thing like with the krust punk bands. If you would read the lyrics you would … say [it's] political. Although if you'd … make some analysis … then you would clearly see there was, let's say, liberal elements, yeh? Like focussing on self, and focussing on personal experience, or just kind of slogans.

Craig O'Hara also notes an association between punk and lifestylism, which he characterises as a ghettoising tendency to 'stay within their own circle and … reject … the possibility of widespread anarchy'[17] (which many lifestylists would of course dispute). O'Hara explains his conception of lifestylism further:

> Here one would consider himself [*sic*] an anarchist but would resign himself [*sic*] to the fact that other people are not capable of ruling themselves. This idea echoes the epitome of bourgeois culture. The belief that 'I'm OK but everyone else is messed up' *is not anarchism*, but has found a pathetic home in many Punk anarchists' writings.[18]

Interviewee Paulina in Poland expressed similar concerns:

> I do have a problem with the kind of subcultural way of thinking … when people say that they are kind of better, they feel better than other people because they have [their] own y'know, media … Sometimes I have a problem with the subcultural expressions of it, which is more dividing us sometimes from the people outside. [laughs] What *is* outside?

In addition to the perceived 'ghetto mentality' or exclusivity, or even elitism, identified in the lifestylist/punk association, Artur viewed the 'fetishisation' of any subculture as problematic:

> it's probably connected with the subcultural thinking about the scene … as a goal … It was all OK about punk … when some people at least tried to treat it as an aim to achieve some goals, but, I think this is the nature of the subculture, that it's just like constant … It's about *being*. *Being* punk, *being* hardcore, *being* straight edge or whatever, *being* skinhead, or … graffiti, or I dunno how many subcultures you have.

So while the likes of *Profane Existence* embrace lifestyle politics, others view lifestylism's connection with punk as a problem. The problem is said to be that in punk's sub-cultural navel gazing it becomes ghettoised, elitist, and overly individualist – and as a result becomes incapable of engaging in serious anarchist activism or revolutionary agitation.

[17] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 87
[18] Ibid. [emphasis added]

The criticisms of lifestylism as a whole, and also particularly of punk's perceived connection with lifestylism, often come from positions which reflect the workerist caricature. Discussing the UK anarcho-punk scene of the early 1980s, Daniel O'Guérin writes of 'a debate at this time between the emerging *anarchist punk* philosophy and traditional *class struggle* anarchists.'[19] This view of the 'old-guard'[20] struggling to come to terms with a new expression of anarchist politics is echoed by Richard Porton, who recalls a 'conversation with the long-time anarcho-syndicalist Sam Dolgoff, who worried that kids compelled [by punk] to draw circled 'As' on the sides of building [*sic*] knew little about anarchist history or theory.' Porton concludes that 'Sam's misgivings were probably not totally misplaced.'[21] Regular *Black Flag* contributor Nick Heath, with particular reference to Crass, writes that punk-inspired anarchists were 'very much defined by *lifestyle* and ultimately a form of *elitism* that frowned upon the mass of the working class for its failure to act.'[22] Likewise, O'Guérin writes that punk 'espoused *lifestylist* politics … without seeming to grasp the implications of the wider *class struggle*. In consequence some see punk as a distraction from the work that really needs to be done.'[23] So according to these criticisms, punk's association with lifestylism sets it in opposition to (or at least as a distraction from) 'proper' anarchism, which is identified as being focussed on class struggle (or 'social anarchism' in Bookchin's terms). This criticism does not run one-way, and as will be discussed below 'punky' anarchist groups like Class War and CrimethInc. are dismissive of this 'old guard' of traditional anarchism.

Workerism, then, is a caricature exaggeration of political persuasions which hold the working class as the primary agent of revolution, and consider the means of production as the terrain on which *any* revolutionary movement or activity must occur. So workerist anarchism contends that any hopes for revolution must be pinned on the working class, and that revolution must be conceived and executed by the working class *alone*. It is this emphasis on the working class *to the exclusion of all other classes* that really distinguishes workerism. As intimated above, the workerist caricature is often reflected in positions emanating from anarcho-syndicalism. To provide some examples from prominent anarcho-syndicalists: Emile Pouget writes that '[o]ther than on *the economic terrain*,

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[19] O'Guérin 'What's in (A) song?' in *Arena Three*, p. 18, [emphasis added]

[20] According to Norman Nawrocki, at least one of the 'old-guard,' anarcho-syndicalist Albert Meltzer, thought the Sex Pistols' 'Anarchy in the UK' was 'bloody good.' (Norman Nawrocki, 'From Rhythm Activism to Bakunin's Bum: Reflections of an unrepentant anarchist violinist on "anarchist music",' in *Arena Three*, p. 64)

[21] Richard Porton, 'Introduction,' in *Arena One: On anarchist cinema*, Richard Porton (ed.), (Hastings: ChristieBooks, and Oakland, California: PM Press, 2009), p. iv. Though Porton does accept that '[f]or a younger generation born towards the end of the Cold War, punk music was as likely to be an entry point into anarchism as increasingly distant memories of the Spanish Civil War.' (ibid.)

[22] Nick Heath, 'The UK anarchist movement - Looking back and forward,' originally written in 2006 for an issue of *Black Flag*, posted to libcom.org by 'Steven' (15th November 2006): http://libcom.org/library/the-uk-anarchist-movement-looking-back-and-forward [accessed 10th November 2014], [emphasis added]

[23] O'Guérin, 'What's in (A) song?' in *Arena Three*, p. 20, [emphasis added]

direct action is a meaningless formula';[24] similarly, Tom Brown argues that '[s]ocialism is not a political system but an economic method,'[25] and favourably quotes James Connolly that '"[o]nly the industrial form of organisation offers us even a theoretical constructive socialist programme. *There is no constructive socialism except on the industrial field*"';[26] and Albert Meltzer writes that '[s]yndicalism not only implied a fighting organisation *independent of any other class* but also the intention by the workers grouped in industry to take over their places of work.'[27] It is not argued here that anarcho-syndicalism is encapsulated wholly by the reductive workerist caricature – but the similarities of focus are clear, and Bookchin includes anarcho-syndicalism in his 'anti-lifestylist' social anarchism, which will be of importance when discussing the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy in relation to DIY punk, below.

Of course, most strains of socialism (and most strains of anarchism) take careful consideration of the role of the working class, but a workerist position also puts particular emphasis on the inherently counter-revolutionary nature of the ruling class *and the middle class*. As the name of one publisher has it, they are 'Openly Classist.'[28] As an example of this 'classist' approach it is interesting to examine the views of Andy Anderson (a contributor to Class War Federation's publications, as discussed below). He considers that the *whole* middle class is irrevocably implicated in the perpetuation of capitalist society, and that the anarchist movement too is sullied by association with the middle class. Anderson perceives a 'class corruption' at the root of anarchist philosophy, evidenced by the fact that 'Kropotkin, one their main mentors [*sic*], was a member of the nobility … Bakunin, another, was middle class.'[29] This class-identity focus is in tension with economic class analyses – but as mentioned above, the 'workerist' label is not argued to be one that is accurately or consistently applied. So this workerist caricature, at least as espoused by Anderson, has a reductive

[24] Emile Pouget, *Direct Action*, (London: Kate Sharpley Library, 2003 [1907]), p. 2, [emphasis added]
[25] Tom Brown, *Syndicalism*, (London: Phoenix Press, 1990), p. 18
[26] Ibid. p. 15, (quote from James Connolly, *The Wage Slave*, (Chicago, Illinois: Workers' (Communist) Party, 1926), page number not given), [emphasis added]
[27] Albert Meltzer, *First Flight. The Origins of Anarcho-Syndicalism in Britain*, (London: Kate Sharpley Library, 2002 [1991]), p. 7, [emphasis added]
[28] This publisher was based in Manchester, and in a description on the Kate Sharpley Library website, discussing the set-up of their own website, they say, 'a class verification system will make it a no-go for anyone other than working class.' (http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/3n5ts6 [accessed 26th November 2014]). And in the back-pages of Andy (Angry) Anderson and Mark Anderson's *The Enemy is Middle Class* they write 'We don't want to hear from any middle class people at all unless they're sending us money.' (Andy Anderson and Mark Anderson, *The Enemy is Middle Class*, (Manchester: Openly Classist, 1998), p. 140
[29] Anderson and Anderson, *The Enemy is Middle Class*, p. 19. Anderson also perceives a particular type of 'working class behaviour' and as a result rejects any possibility of class-mobility, since even those few working class people who sometimes find their way into middle class occupations 'almost always still *behave like* working class people; that is, they don't mix socially with middle class people.' (Ibid. p. 20, [emphasis added]) And likewise, middle class people must engage in 'pathetic and ridiculous antics … (in dress, speech, behaviour) so as to try to feel like and/or be taken for "working class".' (Ibid. p. 19). See also: John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse*, (Boulder, Colorado: Paladin, 1978)

class analysis – and in this light an accusation of being middle class is enough to discredit any strain of anarchism, as especially aimed at lifestylists (as demonstrated below).

Class consciousness is another important theme related to the workerist caricature, and of especial interest in relation to punk. Wilhelm Reich, though not normally identifiable as a typical workerist,[30] emphasises the importance of class consciousness in workerist (and classically Marxist) terms, arguing that 'to be a member of the proletariat' is an 'indispensible prerequisite … for class consciousness':[31]

> The concept of class consciousness plays a leading role in socialist politics and the socialist movement; the attainment of class consciousness by the oppressed sections of the peoples of all lands is demanded as the *most urgent prerequisite* for the revolutionary overthrow of the prevailing social system.[32]

So, according to the workerist caricature, along with the primacy of the 'economic terrain' and the revolutionary potential of the working class *alone*, class consciousness is preeminent in any 'proper' anarchism.

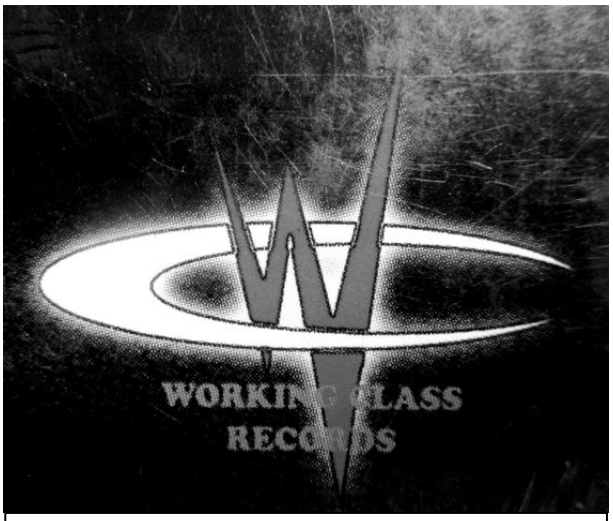

Fig. 6.2 – Logo of Working Class records (Jakarta), detail from *All Sound Parade* compilation, (Working Class records, 2008)

The issues of class and class consciousness are somewhat ambiguous in punk, and the DIY scene more widely – and this speaks to a core divergence between the lifestylist and workerist caricatures. McKay, writing about the DIY movement in the UK during the 1990s, argues that it 'present[ed] itself as being *blind to class* (that is, is *dominated by middle-class activists*).'[33] This points to lifestylism's argued lack of engagement with class analyses, and lifestylists' perceived position of class privilege, which either goes unrecognised or is unaddressed. Anarchist Federation, in the UK, write that 'this form of

[30] As example of Reich's more nuanced conception he argues that 'class consciousness is of an *entirely personal nature*' (*What is Class Consciousness*, (London: Socialist Reproduction, 1973 [1934]), pp. 22, 23, [emphasis added]). And that 'those under the influence of the social and economic process *must somehow change* in order to carry out a social operation such as the social revolution' (*What is Class Consciousness*, (London: Socialist Reproduction, 1973 [1934]), p. 19, [emphasis added]).
[31] Ibid. p. 36
[32] Ibid. p. 19, [emphasis added]
[33] McKay, 'DiY Culture,' in *DiY Culture*, p. 17, [emphasis added]

politics leads to a kind of elitism and snobbery on the part of those living "political" lifestyles.'[34] Wilson disagrees with the notion that lifestylism is '[t]he Preserve of the Middle-Class,'[35] but does so from a firmly middle-class stance as he bemoans the often 'great deal of resistance to the idea that working class people should make sacrifices [too].'[36] So Wilson is conscious of the accusation that lifestylism is middle-class, but rather than offer a class analysis that might be incorporated into lifestylist activism, Wilson retrenches the 'classist' division by pointing the finger at working class people for failing to renounce *their* privilege. This evidences some of the grounds for criticisms of elitism, above.

Class is often a prominent aspect in considerations of punk. Some genres of punk, such as Oi! or street punk, are based around lyrical tropes and aesthetics of working class *identity*. However, this concern for class does not correlate with the workerist conception of class politics, and this is especially apparent in terms of class consciousness. When asked about punk and class, interviewee Liz in the UK replied:

> there are so many different answers to that [laughs] … Y'know you have all these arguments about the original punk and whether it came from y'know really poor people shouting against the system or whether it was all done in the art schools in London and … I mean that kind of *class tension* has always been there with punk.[37]

Indeed, among the interviewees there were widely divergent perceptions of the relationship between class and punk. Jack in the UK gave his take on the situation:

> Well I have to say, I didn't do a poll of people's class background, but I thought, or I felt at the time, we're talking about '80-'86 … that the vast majority of people involved in that scene were working class … Y'know, in a Marxist sense, a sociological sense, they were definitely kind of like working class, but also in a cultural sense, y'know? Your average like punk was the same as your average skinhead who was actually the same as your average townie, casual, spide or whatever, right? … They were working class, but we dressed funny, y'know … There were some middle class people, undoubtedly, right? But, there was very few people in my experience that particularly stood out as 'well posh' or whatever … Everybody that you knew was on the dole or on a scheme … Nobody was at

[34] Anarchist Federation, *A Short Introduction to Anarchist Communism*, (Anarchist Federation (UK), 2015), p. 22
[35] Wilson, *Biting the Hand*, p. 10
[36] Ibid. p. 11
[37] [emphasis added]

> university or college or anything like that, y'know. So in that sense, yeh it was working class.

So Jack identifies in punk a working-class *identity* (the 'sociological sense,' not being 'well posh') *and* working-class *economic relations* (the 'Marxist sense,' people on the dole). Liam, also in the UK, described the punk scene more contemporarily, and was in broad agreement with Jack, saying: 'I think the punk scene is primarily from working class backgrounds … That would be a fair sweeping statement of the whole scene. Like, that is where it comes from.' However, other interviewees had a different view. Liz said, 'I think it's still really middle class dominated,' while Jon argued:

> to me it wasn't even necessarily a working class kind of thing, 'cause [for] a lot of the people it was about, y'know, a boredom, y'know, it was being anti … just the same middle suburbia thing, and that's what was kind of interesting about it, y'know. That's partly why there was people doing lots of really weird and interesting stuff.

Grace's impression was:

> a mixture of … very blind middle class people, very guilty middle class people, and working class people who, who in my relatively distanced experience, seem to be just getting on with it, without making a fuss about whatever the fuck it is that middle class people are complaining about.

But despite her intriguing analysis of the class dynamics in punk, Grace also conceded that 'people don't talk about their own experiences in class. Like I couldn't even begin to tell you about the class backgrounds of people we've played alongside.' Oisín, similarly, described a mixture of class backgrounds. Describing the members of his band he said:

> we all came from sort of different backgrounds like. So I grew up in a council estate, sort of went to the local school across the road like. Bob went to Eton, our drummer … He did, he went to Eton. He's from a very sort of like well-to-do family … Smiley I think went to private school as well.

However, knowing some from a 'well-to-do family' was also viewed as something surprising or novel: 'I never thought I'd end up playing in a band with someone who … went to school at Eton. When he told me that I was like "really? Nah, you're pulling my fucking chain like," y'know.' Even though Oisín was conscious of his bandmates' class backgrounds, and was surprised to learn that Bob was 'posh,' Oisín said, 'to be honest with you I don't really think about it … it was never an issue

with me anyway … You come from where you want y'know. Doesn't really have any sort of bearing on the band, on the music.' Liam echoed this strongly, saying:

> As far as class struggle really sits within the punk movement I don't think there's a huge struggle happening as far as I can see … Like, a lot of people just work shit jobs, to then do their passion at the weekend, or y'know, alotta people just struggling on the dole, or trying to put themselves through college. Like I dunno … it's not something I've really thought that heavily about recently to be honest.

Jack, despite viewing punk as working-class, agreed with Liam's view, saying, 'in terms of having a class politics, I guess people had a sort of like a bottom line class politics, but it wasn't a particularly developed kind of *political* understanding of class perhaps.'[38] Ryan in the UK also spoke on this theme:

> In terms of class consciousness … it didn't seem to be y'know, a big thing, per se y'know … There wasn't this kind of thing of working class solidarity that you often find in anarchist thinking … which is the kinda thinking which in some ways I kinda think in modern terms has lost its way a little bit, in the sense that a lot of people view it as archaic.

So, Liz's assertion of a class tension is clearly evident, and while there is a general awareness of class at a basic level, this does not translate into a workerist class *consciousness*. *Profane Existence* columnist Joel explicates a déclassé or 'class traitor' position within the US punk scene, along with an intersectional analysis:

> We are the inheritors of the white supremacist, patriarchal, capitalist world order. A prime position as defenders of the capital of the ruling class and the overseers of the underclass has been set aside for us by our parents, our upbringing, our culture, our history, and yet we have the moral gumption to reject it. As Punks we reject our inherited race *and class* positions because we know they are bullshit.[39]

Discussing the Indonesian punk scene, Martin-Iverson's view differs to Joel *PE*'s, arguing that 'punk repositions and rearticulates class rather than transcending or displacing it':[40]

> The social composition of Indonesian punk is somewhat ambiguous – including urban poor, creative workers, student activists and assorted 'middle class' dropouts; however, I

[38] [emphasis added]
[39] Joel, 'columnist for the Punk-anarchist fanzine' *Profane Existence*, no. 13, (February 1992), quoted in O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 40, [emphasis added]
[40] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 2

> argue that the identification of punk as 'working class' expresses more than a symbolic political affiliation, and instead constitutes a precarious but potentially powerful class alliance grounded in the neoliberal transformation of urban capitalism in Indonesia.[41]

While Martin-Iverson's identification of class relations within punk is quite different to that of Joel from *Profane Existence*, it is nonetheless still also distinct from the reductive workerist class analysis sketched above. In this sense, punk fails to fulfil the workerist caricature's definition of 'proper' anarchism, and yet neither does it correlate neatly with the lifestylist caricature in this regard.

In terms of the supposed dichotomy between workerism and lifestylism, there is a general perception that punk is more associated with the latter – though this is clearly recognised as a problem, and is complicated in some significant respects. However, it will be argued here that a closer examination of punk's relationship to anarchism in fact collapses the workerist/lifestylist dichotomy completely. This will especially be the case in the consideration of DIY punk ethics and production practices. Before that, two high-profile anarchist groups closely associated with punk, CrimethInc. and Class War, will be examined in relation to lifestylism and workerism.

Class War and CrimethInc.

CrimethInc. and Class War were both prominent in the case studies. But while they are both identifiably 'punky' groups, they are typically associated with opposite ends of the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy – CrimethInc. as lifestylists, Class War as workerists. Therefore it will be informative to explore these groups' relationships to the debate between lifestylism and workerism, and their own reflections on their relationships to punk.

- **Class War**

As discussed in the case studies, Class War are an anarchist group that emerged in the early-1980s, after the founding of the *Class War* newspaper by Ian Bone in 1982.[42] Bone was inspired by the propagandistic successes of Crass, and borrowed the punk aesthetic to promote a more class-focussed version of anarchist politics to a newly emerging and receptive punk audience. Class War's open and decentralised structure, particularly in terms of being able to publish through the group's organs without any central vetting or censorship, means that a wide range of perspectives fall under

[41] Ibid. p. 1
[42] The Class War Federation was founded at a conference in Manchester in 1986.

the Class War banner – as interviewee Jack puts it: 'their politics were all over the place.' For instance, the 1992 book *Unfinished Business … The politics of Class War* was written by a small, and arguably unrepresentative, portion of the Class War Federation.[43] And likewise, the positions and reflections detailed in issue 73 of *Class War* (summer 1997) are written in the immediate aftermath of the 'dissolution' of Class War Federation – though some members kept Class War going as 'London Class War' and their views are not represented in what was mooted by its authors as the 'final' issue of the newspaper. However, despite this, some clear positions can be observed within Class War's politics – and any anomalous statements will be identified as such here.

Fig. 6.3 – Class War patch, UK.

- *Class*

Despite their grounding in, and persisting association with punk, Class War were at pains to distinguish themselves from Crass's brand of 'peace punk' anarchism. This was most simply achieved by advocating violence (as in their page three splashes of 'Hospitalised Coppers' for instance), but also by placing class analysis at the centre of their politics. Ramsay Kanaan, former singer with Political Asylum and co-founder of AK Press and subsequently PM Press, argues that Crass were 'very middle-class':

> Other than joining the peace movement, Crass did not talk about class and were very anti-class: 'Left wing, right wing, it's a load of shit. Middle-class, working-class, I don't give a shit.' – probably because Crass were mostly middle-class, of course.

[43] While the book itself details a democratic process of circulation of drafts among Federation members (Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business*, p. 3), former Class War members expressed concern with the book's claim to represent the whole Federation and portrayed it as representing only a narrow faction within Class War.

> So they had no class analysis or systematic analysis – of capitalism or systems of oppressions and hence their actions were largely individualistic instead of collective actions to change society.[44]

So, even while *Class War* and the Class War Federation's emergence had been spurred by anarcho-punk, their anarchist politics was deliberately and consciously distinguished from the standard-bearers of that movement, Crass. Interviewee Jack had been involved with the Class War Federation since its initial formation. Despite coming from an anarcho-punk background himself, he asserted that 'Class War really appealed to me on the class thing … I liked their paper and I liked what they were saying, and I associated with that, I could identify with it, the class element, right?' Echoing Lucy Parsons' famous quote,[45] an early issue of *Class War* newspaper states:

> the ruling class will never give up its stolen, spoilt lives. It will never give away its power unless we violently take it as a class. The only language the ruling class and its paid mercenaries the cops and army, understand is that of class violence. WE FIGHT FOR A WORKING CLASS REVOLUTION.[46]

Strongly reflecting the workerist caricature above, Class War identify the working class as '*the only people* capable of destroying capitalism and the State, and building a better world for everyone.'[47] The working class is then defined as:

> people who live by their labour … the ownership of property that generates wealth is the dividing line. If you have enough property or money not to have to work then you are not working class. The other component of class identity is 'social power'. The working classes do not have power.[48]

This definition of the working class from *Unfinished Business* is quite broad[49] and inevitably includes a large number of people who would *describe themselves* as middle class, despite not owning

[44] Ramsay Kanaan interviewed in Biel, *Beyond the Music*, p. 75
[45] 'Never be deceived that the rich will allow you to vote away their wealth.' See: Lucy Parsons, *Freedom, Equality and Solidarity*, (Chicago, Illinois: Charles H. Kerr, 2004)
[46] *Class War*, (c. August 1986), (not numbered, not dated)
[47] Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business*, pp. 58, 59, [emphasis added]
[48] Ibid. p. 58
[49] In addition to workers in all sorts of industries and the unemployed, the definition goes on to explicitly include some controversial occupations, such as workers in 'the finance industry up to section supervisors, soldiers up to NCOs [Non-Commissioned Officers], police up to seargent [*sic*] … & many of the self employed[.]' (Ibid.)

wealth-generating property or having 'social power.'[50] As a result, class consciousness takes on key importance, which is basically expressed as derision for the middle class. Class War describe the function of the middle class as:

> manag[ing] the working class in the interests of the ruling class. To ensure the smooth running of capitalist society. To watch out for potential crisis in capitalism and devise avoiding action.[51]

So, as this definition would have it, the middle class are *active agents* in the preservation of capitalism, rather than a mere buffer between the working class and ruling class, and they certainly have no common cause with the working (i.e. revolutionary) class.[52] The list of occupations given alongside this definition of middle class correlates closely to other writings by Andy Anderson (a former member of Class War Federation mentioned in the discussion of workerism above), especially in its unusual inclusion of school teachers and social workers[53] – so it is *perhaps* the case that Anderson's particularly 'classist' perspective is being brought to bear here, rather than the perspective of the wider Federation membership.

In any case, Class War's views on class are not always so crudely reductive, or starkly workerist. In their theoretical journal, *The Heavy Stuff*, they argue that 'the emphasis has shifted from the workplace to the community, as the focal point for class struggle,'[54] which is obviously distinct from the workerist caricature in terms of the site of struggle, even while the agent of revolution remains as the working class. In *Class War* #73 they write that they suspect it is *not possible* 'to make a revolution in which only working class people participate … [or] to create a purely working class organisation.'[55] The problem, they argue, essentially boils down to an impassable difficulty in actually defining who is working class and who is not: 'how do you determine who is allowed to get involved? Do you have a class-based means test or is it down to intuition? What about the numerous grey areas?'[56] This is clearly a significant departure from the reductive concept of class espoused by Anderson. However, even with this qualification, Class War do not abandon their core class analysis: 'This doesn't mean that we don't know who the enemy is, but *nor is everything black*

[50] This nadir of class consciousness is perhaps summed-up in former deputy Prime Minister John Prescott's famous comment prior to the 1997 general election: 'we're all middle class now!' 'Profile: John Prescott,' (27th August 2007): http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6636565.stm [accessed 28th January 2016]
[51] Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business*, p. 57
[52] This definition includes managers and small employers, but also 'journalists, doctors … social workers, vicars and priests, teachers' (Ibid.), so the theme of 'social power' appears to be at the crux of this distinction.
[53] See: Anderson and Anderson, *The Enemy is Middle Class*, p. 19
[54] *The Heavy Stuff*, no. 1, (December 1987), p. 12
[55] *Class War*, no. 73, (summer 1997), p. 6
[56] Ibid. [emphasis added]

and white.'[57] However, in terms of class analysis, these excerpts from *The Heavy Stuff* and *Class War* #73 are fairly exceptional in their challenging of the reductive class concepts expressed elsewhere, and it might be generally stated that Class War's analysis *basically* correlates with that of the workerist caricature. Having identified Class War as a 'punky' group, this workerist position is surprising – especially in view of the discussion of workerism, punk and class above.

- *Lifestylism*

In a further reflection of the workerist caricature, Class War have also been highly critical of lifestylism. Ten years prior to Murray Bookchin's polemic (*Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: an unbridgeable chasm*), an issue of *Class War* carried an article bemoaning 'groups of "life-stylers" [as] … patronising or abusing working class values,'[58] and in the founding statement of the Class War Federation in 1986 they write:

> Now is the time for Class War anarchists and all who agree with class struggle politics to break away from the ghetto of dropouts, drugs and hippy attitudes. There is no place for anarchism in the working class till it can offer something better than free festivals and political fanzines.[59]

And again explicitly: 'Class War came into being with the aim of sticking the boot into anarcho-pacifism and lifestyle politics.'[60] Class War argue that lifestylism romanticises poverty, and particularly attack dropping out, or 'adopting a "tramp" … lifestyle' as they term it. They write that '[t]his strange behaviour is usually accompanied by the use of hard drugs and *right-wing individualism* hiding behind the label of "anarchism".'[61] So lifestylists are perceived as being in opposition to anarchism, even to the extent of being denigrated as right wing – which foreshadows many of the arguments made by Bookchin some years later, as discussed below. This opposition to 'hippy' lifestylism is rolled-in with derision for the middle class as well, for example: 'a ragged-arsed bare foot hippy from the middle class on the dole is still middle class.'[62]

However, there *are* threads within Class War's politics that could easily be described as reflecting the lifestylist caricature. For example, from *Unfinished Business*:

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[57] Ibid. [emphasis added]
[58] *Class War*, (c. April 1985), (not numbered, not dated)
[59] *Class War*, (c. August 1986), (not numbered, not dated)
[60] *Class War*, no. 73, p. 8
[61] Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business*, p. 80, [emphasis added]
[62] Ibid. pp. 78, 79

> Fundamentally this is about bringing politics into all areas of peoples [*sic*] lives … [C]apitalists invade every area of our lives, in turn the working class have to retrieve every part of their lives … This development becomes the *foundation* and energy behind *any* possible revolutionary movement.[63]

There is a clear emphasis on the 'revolution of everyday life' here, even to the extent of describing it as *the foundation* of revolution. This 'revolutionary personalism'[64] might easily be rephrased as 'lifestylism,' and indeed an emphasis on subjectivism is included in criticisms of lifestylism by the likes of Bookchin. Recalling his impression of the anarchist movement in the UK of the 1980s, Class War founder Ian Bone favourably quotes Wilhelm Reich:

> '[T]hose who make a revolution without explicit reference to everyday life speak with a corpse in their mouths'. But the anarchists did speak with corpses in their mouths – usually Spanish or Ukrainian – and their papers seemed to have no connection with the ordinary lives of anyone.[65]

So, Class War seem to straddle (supposedly) contradictory positions in their simultaneous rejection and embrace of lifestylism. However, rather than identify hypocrisy, this in fact points to the misuse or mislabelling of lifestylism – an error Bookchin also makes in *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*. They identify a narrow subcultural aesthetic as 'lifestylism' and reject it on those grounds, *while actually arguing in favour of quintessentially lifestylist political approaches*.

- *'The Old Guard'*

Another element of Bone's quotation of Reich is its rejection of the anarchist movement's 'old guard.' He describes attendees at a *Black Flag* conference as 'deadwood CNT worshippers and armchair-armed struggle fetishists'[66] and blasts *Freedom* as 'a fucking boring, awful liberal irrelevance of a newspaper.'[67] This is echoed with less fiery panache in *The Heavy Stuff*, when they ask: 'How much longer are we going to be content to base our politics around ideas and actions that

[63] Ibid. p. 101, [emphasis added]
[64] As it is termed by Laurence Davis in 'Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unhelpful Dichotomy,' *Anarchist Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, (2010), p. 62. He continues: 'Its defining characteristic is the recognition that the liberation of everyday life is an essential component of the anti-authoritarian revolutionary change.' (Ibid. p. 63)
[65] Bone, *Bash the Rich*, p. 256
[66] Ibid. p. 102
[67] Ibid. p. 167

were formulated nearly 100 years ago?'[68] A 2012 pamphlet published by 'The Friends of Class War' rearticulates a similar argument in a more contemporary context:

> What is certain is that existing efforts are not enough; the organisations there are at times are embarrassing with a precious view of themselves, and are not up to the political situation as they have a complete lack of dynamism and ambition, unable to develop beyond stereotypical forms and existing practices, which have never delivered progress … You've had opportunities for years to do something, anything even, and blown it … simplistic slowly, slowly, ever so slowly build the party/Federation plans have no chance of success.[69]

An issue of *Class War* puts it simply: '[w]e reject the boring character of the so-called "revolutionary" groups. Politics must be fun, it's part of ordinary day to day life and must be able to take the piss out of itself!'[70] This perhaps has a comparative similarity with punk's rejection of its musical and cultural forebears (as discussed elsewhere[71]), and is also a theme that emerges strongly in CrimethInc.'s writing, as discussed below. *Class War* #73 reflectively discusses this back-biting distrust of the 'old guard' and 'stereotypical organisations':

> Class War has always been rightly paranoid about ending up like the left parties and sects, defending particular unchanging theoretical positions and traditions, regardless of how much things have changed since 1917 or 1936. We set out to avoid this, but fell into another trap – defending a rebellious 'attitude' and 'image', rather than looking at what's wrong with the world and how we can best intervene to change it. In many respects it's true to say that Class War failed to become much more than a 'punk' organisation.[72]

So Class War tried to break away from the 'old guard' of anarchism, but in doing so ended up appealing mostly to a narrow cultural milieu drawn from the punk scene – which, interestingly, the authors deem a failure.

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[68] *The Heavy Stuff*, no. 1, p. 13
[69] The Friends of Class War, 'Introduction,' *Class War Classix*, (spring 2012), p. 4. This attack explicitly identifies 'the Libcom website' among other anarchist organisations.
[70] *Class War*, no. 38, (c. 1989), (not dated)
[71] See: Jim Donaghey, 'Bakunin Brand Vodka: An Exploration into Anarchist-Punk and Punk-Anarchism,' *Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies*, no. 1, (2014), pp. 138-170
[72] *Class War*, no. 73, p. 8

- *Punk*

While *Class War* and the Class War Federation had an explicit emphasis on class (as their moniker would suggest), there remained an association with punk – they 'had a punky image' as Jack put it: 'It combined a class politics and a kind of a, a spikiness, if you like, y'know, and they would accept people as punks.' As mentioned above, despite having a close association with punk, Class War were keen to distinguish themselves from the anarcho-punk scene affiliated with Crass. Bone quotes *Class War* contributor Jimmy Grimes giving Crass a decidedly backhanded compliment, comparing their extensive influence to that of Peter Kropotkin. He writes:

> [They] had found a way of getting anarchist political ideas through to tens of thousands of youngsters. From the plastic As of *Anarchy in the UK*, Crass had given the circle As real political meaning. They had created an embryonic political movement … They'd reached punters in towns, villages and estates that no other anarchist message could ever hope to reach … but like [Kropotkin] *their politics are up shit creek*.[73]

McKay considers Class War's criticism here to be rooted in Crass's 'refusal to situate their actions in the traditional labour framework of class opposition – presumably they are compared to Kropotkin, a one-time prince, to signal Class War's distrust of influence through privilege.'[74] Class War were keen 'to break out of the anarcho-punk scene and create a real force for credible Anarchist politics,'[75] and Bone states that, in his view: 'anarcho-punk music, far from helping the struggle, got in the way of it by diverting the punks away from street action and into the anarcho-ghetto of endless squat gigs.'[76] Yet Class War still drew a significant proportion of their membership (and newspaper sales which peaked at a circulation of 16,000) from the punk scene. Bone describes *Class War* as 'a punkoid fanzine mutated into a newspaper,'[77] and Bone himself played in the punk band Living Legends. He also makes particular mention of 'Spike and Tim Paine, two of the first anarcho-punks to get involved with CW, [who edited issue six of *Class War* in early 1984, and who] opened up a squat … which served as both an anarchist bookshop and CW's contact address.'[78] Several other groups of punks are also mentioned in the Class War ranks, and also that '[m]ost of the movement outside London was still anarcho-punkville.'[79] The newspaper makes explicit references to punk throughout its issues, including CD and gig reviews, and Class War were also responsible for

[73] Jimmy Grimes, *Class War*, no. 2, (not dated), quoted in Bone, *Bash the Rich*, p. 119, [emphasis added]
[74] McKay, *Senseless Acts of Beauty*, pp. 77, 78
[75] *The Heavy Stuff*, no. 2, (c. 1988), (not dated), p. 18
[76] Bone, *Bash the Rich*, p. 166
[77] Ibid., p. 121
[78] Ibid. p. 196
[79] Ibid. p. 198

releasing numerous punk cassette compilations.[80] The Rock Against The Rich gigs and tours of 1988 and 2015 also featured numerous punk bands. So a tension is evident in Class War, between their criticisms (and sometimes outright rejection) of punk, and their persisting association with punk on numerous levels.

Class War arguably fulfil the workerist caricature in their identity-based class-analysis (especially in rejection of the middle class) and their derision of lifestylists – but their 'classism' is at least occasionally brought into question, and they frequently espouse political approaches which overlap quite extensively with lifestylist concerns. Their punky 'fuck you' attitude to 'old guard' traditional anarchist groups is a current which is also identifiable in CrimethInc.'s output, as will be discussed below along with other key similarities and differences between Class War and CrimethInc.

- **CrimethInc.**

The CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective is an anarchist propaganda and activist group based in the US. They emerged from the DIY punk milieu in the 1990s, and since that time have published several theory books/activist guides, published twelve issues (to date) of their periodical journal *Rolling Thunder*, as well as countless posters, stickers, pamphlets, documentaries, and music releases. They are frequently denigrated as lifestylists by their detractors, especially in the wake of their widely read (if not unanimously popular) *Days of War, Nights of Love* published in 2001. Like Class War, numerous contributors publish under the CrimethInc. banner, and as such divergent opinions and approaches are discernible. However, CrimethInc.'s overall politics is more coherent than that of Class War, though an evolution of ideas is observable through their core texts and in their serial publications, especially relating to the development of class analyses, culminating in their 2011

[80] Class War produced and released punk compilations, as well as live recordings of prominent punk bands, and distributed other punk music as well. Examples include (not exhaustively): the *Better Dead Than Wed* 7" released on Conflict's Mortarhate label in 1986; the *Class War. Incitement to Riot* VHS compilation (not dated); a double disc CD-R release titled *Class War* by Bone's band The Living Legends and Unit, released in 2008 on DNA Records; *Inside For Us … Outside For Them* compilation benefit for Class War on Filthy Tapes (not dated); Class War also distributed the bootleg tape *Crass – Peel Session, Interviews and Bits* (not dated). *Class War*, no. 85, (summer 2003) includes purchase information for *Class War presents – Discharge live* (recorded in 1981), and numerous compilation music releases such as: *Class War presents – Fuck the Government*; *Street Punk from the Concrete Jungle* vols. 1, 2 & 3; *Class War presents – Fuck the Police* vols. 1 & 2 (a mix of rap and punk); *We've had Enough… Let's Fucken Riot. 100% Class War punk rock…*; *Class War presents – Let Loose the Pitbulls* (hardcore from the US); *We're Gonna Set the World On Fire*, '100% Class War punk rock from around the globe. Punk bands from Poland, Brazil, Canada, Italy and the UK telling it like it is'; *Out Of Order psc – Advance Australia Where*… 'Hardcore punk from down under'; *Mayhem 2003*, '18 Australian bands for Class War'.

volume *Work*. This is not to say, by any means, that CrimethInc. have shifted from being arch-lifestylists to become class-struggle workerists – as the following discussion will make clear.

- *Lifestylism*

As mentioned, CrimethInc. are often labelled as lifestylists, and indeed there is much in their writing to support this view. CrimethInc. argue that '[w]e should put the anarchist ideal – no masters, no slaves – into effect in *our daily lives* however we can':[81]

> If we are to transform ourselves, we must transform the world – but to begin reconstructing the world, we must reconstruct ourselves … Our appetites and attitudes and roles have all been moulded by this world that turns us against ourselves and each other. How can we take and share control of our lives … when we've spent those lives being conditioned to do the opposite?[82]

Further, CrimethInc. argue that '[a]ny kind of capital-R Revolution … will be short-lived and irrelevant without a fundamental change in our relationships.'[83] So, according to CrimethInc., lifestyle politics is *essential* and *preeminent*, and revolutionary philosophies or actions lacking this consideration are fundamentally flawed. CrimethInc. are highly concerned with consumption and consumerism, particularly in terms of a refusal of bourgeois capitalist *culture*. This is termed, in the vein of Abbie Hoffman, as 'dropping out.' CrimethInc. define dropping out as: 'ceasing to make purchases, reducing your needs, and finding other sources for what you require.'[84] However, this is not argued to be an end in itself – '[d]ropping out is a point of departure for revolutionary struggle, not a destination'[85] (and indeed in their more recent book, *Work*, they write that 'those who drop out don't find themselves in another world – they remain in this one, plunging downward'[86]). CrimethInc.'s exhortations here closely reflect the lifestylist caricature, especially in their understanding of personalistic revolution as a prerequisite for any significant social change.

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[81] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Days of War Nights of Love. Crimethink for beginners*, (Salem, Oregon: CrimethInc. Free Press, 2011 [2001]), p. 39, [emphasis added]
[82] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Expect Resistance. A field manual*, (Salem, Oregon: CrimethInc., 2008), p. 45
[83] Ibid. p. 148
[84] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Rolling Thunder: an anarchist journal of dangerous living*, no. 2, (winter 2006), p. 10
[85] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 2, p. 17
[86] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Work*, (Salem, Oregon: CrimethInc., 2011), pp. 311, 312

- *Class*

In a further reflection of the lifestylist caricature, and in sharp distinction to the workerist caricature, CrimethInc. dismiss 'traditional' class analyses and neither the working class nor the workplace are given primacy in their writing. Indeed, as demonstrated in the references here, most of their engagement with class analysis emerges in 2011's *Work* and 2013's *Contradictionary*, while earlier texts do not deal with the issue to any significant degree. Jeppesen notes that, as such, CrimethInc. 'are often considered "lifestyle anarchists" who have no self-awareness of their *class privilege*.'[87] Indeed, CrimethInc. argue against workerist conceptions of class, viewing class generally as a social categorisation that is to be resisted, rather than as a revolutionarily significant social relation. For example, they write that 'some activists focus on "classism" rather than capitalism, as if the poor were simply a social group and *bias* against them a bigger problem than the structures that produce poverty.'[88] And elsewhere they write: 'fixation on the working class can promote a sort of class-based identity politics – even though class is not an identity, but a relationship.'[89] They explicitly argue against the working class as a revolutionary subject, stating that this 'fosters a determinism that objectifies human beings and revolutionary struggle while avoiding the complexities of reality.'[90] Instead they assert that:

> We have to *supersede* our current roles and identities, reinventing ourselves and our interests through the process of resistance. We shouldn't base our solidarity on shared attributes or social positions, but on a shared *refusal of our roles* in the economy.[91]

Fig. 6.4 – Screen-print art at InstitutA, Depok.

[87] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 43, [emphasis added]
[88] CrimethInc., *Work*, p. 250
[89] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Contradictionary. A bestiary of words in revolt*, (Salem, Oregon: CrimethInc. Writers' Bloc, 2013), p. 255
[90] Ibid.
[91] CrimethInc., *Work*, p. 250, [emphasis added]

Fig. 6.5 – Anarchist books at InstitutA's library, Depok, including CrimethInc. titles and bootlegged versions of *Anarchy Alive!* by Uri Gordon.

They even defend the middle class against workerist dismissals, writing: '[t]here's no moral high ground in capitalism: it's not more ethical to be further down the pyramid. Trying to appease your conscience isn't likely to do anyone else a lot of good.'[92] CrimethInc. argue that contemporary dynamics of capitalist society mean that the working class no longer occupies a position as *the* revolutionary class: 'The line between production and consumption is blurring as new sectors of the economy absorb the worker's entire being into the task of producing value.'[93] As a result, class-based organising and activism are deemed to be no longer appropriate: 'unions are woefully outflanked and out-moded … Anticapitalists are still casting around for new forms of resistance that could take the place of *the union and the strike*.'[94] Further, CrimethInc.'s suggestion that 'anticapitalists' are seeking out new modes of resistance perhaps implies that those who cling to the 'old' methods are no longer even attempting to counter capitalism at all. And their assertion that '[a]nybody who wants to change the subject back to the proletariat once the issue of domination itself has been broached *is not a comrade*,'[95] places them in explicit opposition to workerism.

However, Jeppesen considers that CrimethInc. 'both reject and exploit their own class privilege,'[96] and argues that:

> [CrimethInc.'s] main political point is that because the middle class is responsible for sustaining the North American capitalist system, if we want to overthrow that system, we need to renounce our privilege and become *class traitors*. For CrimethInc. and for lots of other white middle-class kids, this is the first crucial step toward social revolution and liberation.[97]

[92] Ibid. p. 349
[93] Ibid. p. 168
[94] Ibid. p. 97, [emphasis added]
[95] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Rolling Thunder: an anarchist journal of dangerous living*, no. 6, (autumn 2008), p. 7, [emphasis added]
[96] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 33
[97] Ibid. p. 25, [emphasis added]

This suggestion of a 'déclassé'[98] position is significant, echoing the arguments made by Joel from *Profane Existence*, and in sharp distinction to the class analysis of workerists like Anderson, and indeed, much of Class War's stance. Jeppesen notes that this:

> political choice of 'declassing' … has been critiqued as a choice that only middle-class kids have, but people involved in CrimethInc. come from a range of classes, and the strategies they suggest … work equally well and are actually more important for people who have no money, as anti-poverty survival mechanisms.[99]

CrimethInc. seek to side-step class divisions because: '[i]n the 21st century, longstanding categories of identity correlate less with roles in production.'[100] So, akin to the lifestylist caricature, new dynamics of oppression call for new modes of resistance.

As mentioned however, the political positions expressed under the Crimethinc. banner are not without complication. This is evidenced in a discussion of class consciousness that actually reflects the workerist caricature, above. They write that '[debt] makes it possible for low-income workers to partake in the lifestyles of the wealthy, buying houses and cars and college degrees. This serves to make people *see themselves as middle class* even as they are fleeced by banks and credit card companies.'[101] 'Thus,' they argue (in 'traditional' class analysis terms) that '*a whole class never identifies with its role* or demands better treatment.'[102] It must be stated that this class-based language and analysis are fairly anomalous in terms of CrimethInc.'s wider output, but it is an interesting complication nonetheless.

CrimethInc.'s engagement with class only really emerges in their more recent writing, and even then it is quite distinct from the workerist class analysis – indeed it is also distinct from Class War's position on class, despite both groups' emergence from, and close association with punk.

- *'The Old Guard'*

In common with Class War however, CrimethInc. are sharply critical of 'old guard' or 'traditional' anarchist groups and approaches. They write:

[98] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 2, p. 18
[99] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 40. Jeppesen describes this as 'precarity activism' and the footnote points to 'www.precarity-map.net which maps out collectives, social centres, media, coordination networks, unions and militant research groups across Europe and in Australia.'
[100] CrimethInc., *Work*, p. 249
[101] Ibid. p. 207
[102] Ibid. p. 242, [emphasis added]

> today's radical thinkers and activists … often seem mired in ancient methods and arguments, unable to apprehend what is needed in the present to make things happen. Their place in the tradition of struggle has trapped them in a losing battle, defending positions long useless and outmoded: their constant references to the past not only render them incomprehensible to others, but also prevent them from referencing what is going on around them.[103]

And even more emphatically:

> FACE IT, YOUR POLITICS ARE BORING AS **FUCK** … You know it's true. Otherwise, why does everyone cringe when you say the word [anarchism]? Why has attendance at your anarcho-communist theory discussion group meetings fallen to an all-time low? Why has the oppressed proletariat not come to its senses and joined you in your fight for world liberation? … The truth is, your politics are boring to them because they really are irrelevant.[104]

According to CrimethInc., a significant portion of the contemporary anarchist movement is languishing in the ideas and tactics of the past, and is ill-equipped to tackle the problems of today. And worse, this approach actually alienates people who might otherwise be attracted to revolutionary politics. CrimethInc. explicitly include class-focussed anarchisms in this critique, writing: 'However much theorists of class war might like to see themselves as the voice of the common people, nowadays they are a more obscure demographic than the dropouts they despise.'[105] And, echoing Class War's rejection of the 'old guard': 'As the 19th century recedes further and further into the smoke of failed revolutions, [their] story grows less and less convincing';[106] and 'our boredom is proof that these "politics" are not the key to any real transformation of life. For our lives are boring enough already!'[107] This marks a further distinction from the workerist caricature, but as mentioned, is a point of uncanny similarity with Class War's railing against 'traditional' anarchism – and further, both CrimethInc. and Class War do so in terms reminiscent of the classic early punk trope of boredom.[108]

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[103] CrimethInc., *Days of War Nights of Love*, p. 111

[104] Ibid. pp. 188, 189, [bold in original]

[105] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 2, p. 18

[106] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 6, p. 7

[107] CrimethInc., *Days of War Nights of Love*, p. 189

[108] A cursory glance at some early punk releases demonstrates the repeated 'boredom' trope: The Buzzcocks, 'Boredom,' *Spiral Scratch* EP, (New Hormones, 1977); The Adverts, 'Bored Teenagers,' *The Roxy London WC2* compilation, (Harvest, 1977); The Clash, 'I'm So Bored With The USA,' *The Clash*, (CBS, 1977); and even Crass are repeatedly 'bored,' providing a link with the anarcho-punk scene, for example 'End Result,' *The Feeding of*

- Punk

CrimethInc.'s grounding in the DIY practices of punk has a discernible influence on their aesthetic and philosophy. Jeppesen argues that an engagement with 'the growing global anarchapunk community'[109] is at the root of CrimethInc.'s popularity. They discuss punk on a number of occasions throughout their publications, and continue to be involved in producing punk music (most famously with bands such as Catharsis and Zegota). They also engage in outreach into punk publications, including: 'contributions to countless other independent media projects; in the punk underground, for example … *Slug and Lettuce* and *Profane Existence* and a column … in *Maximum Rock'n'Roll*.'[110] As might be expected, CrimethInc. often argue strongly in favour of punk's value to the anarchist movement, and defend against criticisms of punk. For instance, they write that:

> punk-rock has been notorious for incubating generations of anarchist troublemakers … Critics charge that these examples … are limited by their subcultural nature … [but] what if they are effective precisely because they are explicitly subcultural, and the entire anarchist movement could benefit from taking note of this?[111]

Issue #7 of *Rolling Thunder* takes a particular focus on punk and describes it as a 'sustainable space that nurtures long-term communities of resistance,' further arguing that 'the success of anarcho-punk demonstrates how effective it can be for anarchists to invest themselves in ongoing outreach in a milieu of a manageable scale.'[112] They argue that anarchist activisms which focus on issues outside of activists' everyday lived experience 'cost more energy than [they] generate.'[113] These actions provide little personal fulfilment, whereas 'd.i.y. punk [is] basically pleasure-oriented' and does satisfy this need, which is vital because 'sociality and affirmation are as essential as food or housing.'[114] They also point out that '[i]n contrast to protests, which are often criticised as reactive, at its best punk emphasised creativity, demonstrating a concrete alternative.'[115] This creative element 'enabled participants to build their confidence and experience in low-risk efforts, while producing a great deal of material that doubled as outreach.'[116] CrimethInc. concede that punk is

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the 5000, (Crass, 1978), and 'Chairman Of The Bored,' *Stations of the Crass*, (Crass, 1979). This is by no means an exhaustive list, boring though it is. Interviewee Jon also mentioned the issue of 'boredom' in the discussion of class, above.

[109] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 29

[110] CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Rolling Thunder: an anarchist journal of dangerous living*, no. 3, (summer 2006), p. 108

[111] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 2, p. 16

[112] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 7, p. 74

[113] Ibid. p. 71

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

often primarily a youth movement, but they argue that this can even be viewed as an advantage because: 'youth are arguably among the most potentially rebellious and open to new ideas.'[117] To repeat a key argument from the discussion of politicisation from above, CrimethInc. argue that '[w]ere we to attempt to invent a counterpart to contemporary activism that could replenish energy and propagate anarchist values among people, we could really do worse [than punk].'[118] So CrimethInc. have a generally positive view of punk's relationship to anarchism, but they are evidently conscious of criticisms of punk and set-out to defend against these.

However, CrimethInc. are not wholly uncritical of punk. They write that 'it is crippling for a social movement aimed at transforming the whole of life to be associated with only one subculture.'[119] And echoing some of the workerist criticisms of punk, detailed above, they write:

> Coming into anarchism via punk, people tend to approach anarchist activity in the same way they participate in a youth subculture. This contributes to an anarchist milieu characterised by consumerism rather than initiative, a focus on identity rather than dynamic change, activities limited to the leisure time of the participants, ideological conflicts that boil down to disputes over taste, and an orientation towards youth that makes the movement largely irrelevant upon the onset of adulthood.[120]

So, as much as CrimethInc. acknowledge punk's role in exposing people to anarchist ideas and practices, they are also conscious of the ways in which punk can be considered as (pejoratively) lifestylist, in terms of a focus on culture, consumerism and identity. Crucially however, they argue that these criticisms should not mean that punk is dismissed altogether: 'Whether or not it is desirable – or even possible anymore – to depend on the punk subculture as an incubator for anarchists, we must understand how and why it served this role for the past thirty years.'[121] And in direct response to those who would dismiss punk, they write: 'there's no sense in seeking to expand the anarchist moment by rejecting one of the primary venues through which people have discovered it.'[122]

CrimethInc. has its roots in punk and maintains a close association with that scene, with similarity to Class War in this respect. But rather than sharing Class War's unease, even embarrassment over this punk connection, CrimethInc. argue in defence of punk's contributions to anarchism. CrimethInc.

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid. p. 74
[120] Ibid. p. 70
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.

are also similar to Class War in their rejection of 'old guard' or 'traditional' anarchist movements and tactics. However, in terms of lifestylism and workerism, CrimethInc. are clearly distinct from Class War in their reflection of many aspects of the lifestylist caricature, especially in terms of class analysis (though, as acknowledged there are some complications behind this). As intimated, CrimethInc. are not unanimously popular, and much of the criticism levelled against them is in terms of their perceived association with lifestylism *and punk*.

- Attacks against CrimethInc.

The points of divergence between the lifestylist and workerist caricatures have been made clear, but the rancour between these apparently antagonistic positions is especially stark in workerist denunciations of CrimethInc. These attacks focus on issues of lifestylism and class, and often specifically include associations with punk as part of their denigrations. Some examples that typify this are to found on the anarkismo.net website (which identifies itself as anarcho-communist and platformist[123]) and libcom.org (an abbreviation of 'libertarian communist' listing influences as 'anarchist-communism, anarcho-syndicalism, the ultra-left, left communism, libertarian Marxism, council communism'[124]). For instance, an anarkismo.net contributor writing under the pseudonym 'W' writes:

> Your politics are bourgeois as fuck … Crimethinc substitute … class struggle with a teenage individualistic rebellion based on having fun now. Shoplifting, dumpster diving, quitting work are all put forward as revolutionary ways to live outside the system but amount to nothing more than a parasitic way of life which depends on capitalism without providing any real challenge … Condescending, privileged, middle class crap.[125]

A similarly critical article on libcom.org by 'Ramor Ryan' says:

> CrimethInc begins with the brand name, and ends with the relentless merchandising of 'radical' products on their website. In between there is, as exhibited by this book [*Days of*

[123] 'About Anarkismo.net,' http://anarkismo.net/about_us [accessed 29th November 2014]
[124] Libcom, 'libcom.org: an introduction,' (11th September 2006), http://www.libcom.org/notes/about [accessed 29th November 2014]
[125] W, 'Rethinking Crimethinc.,' (4th September 2006), http://www.anarkismo.net/article/3664?condense_comments=true [accessed 10th November 2014]

> *War, Nights of Love*], an individualist, selfish, and inchoate rebel ideology that eschews work, political organising, and class struggle.[126]

AK Thompson understatedly notes that 'the CrimethInc Ex-Workers Collective … [are] not universally loved,'[127] quoting W's 'scathing article,' which was widely circulated online:

> The US based sub-cultural cult 'Crimethinc' (CWC) who mix anarchism with bohemian drop-out lifestyles and vague anti-civilisation sentiment would have you believe that capitalism is something from which you can merely remove yourself by quitting work, eating from bins and doing whatever 'feels good.'[128]

Ramor Ryan's libcom.org article raises the punk 'accusation':

> CrimethInc's vision seldom rises above that of a suburban kid rebelling against authority. *Mired in the punk rock and crusty sub-culture*, the practical application of all this revolutionary theory is apparently realised by forming a band, fucking in a park, going vegan … [they are] dull and inchoate.[129]

'W' even goes as far as to say that CrimethInc.'s Furious George Collective 'each deserve a bullet for crimes against anarchism' for their *Anarchy in the Age of Dinosaurs* book.[130] It must be assumed that 'W' is not seriously suggesting that anyone be murdered, but the vitriol of the criticisms levelled against CrimethInc. could not be clearer. The articles from the libcom.org and anarkismo.net websites attack CrimethInc. on grounds of class (and class privilege), individualism, ghettoisation/elitism, and failure to identify the working class as the agent of revolution – which correlates extremely closely to the workerist caricature's opposition to lifestylism. Further, CrimethInc. are argued as presenting a fatally corrupted interpretation of anarchism which redirects energy away from useful revolutionary activity. As such, CrimethInc. (as lifestylists) are considered to be *worse than useless* by their workerist detractors.[131]

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[126] Ramor Ryan, 'Days of Crime and Nights of Horror,' posted by Steven, (4th April 2011), (first published in *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, not dated), https://libcom.org/library/days-crime-nights-horror-ramor-ryan [accessed 10th November 2014]

[127] AK Thompson, *Black Bloc White Riot. Anti-Globalization and the Genealogy of Dissent*, (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2010), p. 95

[128] Ibid. endnote 22, p. 174

[129] Ryan, 'Days of Crime and Nights of Horror,' [emphasis added]

[130] W, 'Rethinking Crimethinc.'

[131] To their credit, CrimethInc. engage very generously with these decidedly ungenerous attacks, writing in conciliation with their critics, that '[t]he focus on lifestyle as an end in itself among passive consumers of CrimethInc. literature … has maddened its authors as well.' (CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 3, p. 111)

The terms in which CrimethInc. and punk are derided often echo those of Murray Bookchin's famous polemic *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism. An unbridgeable chasm*. It will be informative, then, to examine Bookchin's claims more closely, and to interrogate their validity in terms of punk. This will involve an exploration of DIY punk production politics in relation to anarchism.

Bookchin's dichotomy and DIY punk

As Mathew Wilson suggests: 'From vegan punks eating out of skips to middle-class liberals buying their organic avocados in Waitrose, there are plenty of stereotypes that spring to mind when the topic of lifestyle politics is raised.'[132] Wilson's examples raise the sub-cultural and class aspects of lifestylism, and, as already described, these are often the terms in which it is denigrated as being 'not proper' anarchism. One of the most prominent (and famously rancorous) attacks has been Murray Bookchin's polemical tract *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism. An unbridgeable chasm*, published in 1995. While Bookchin was not the first anarchist to deride lifestylism (as mentioned, Class War were among those discussing this issue in the 1980s), his assertion that it is irreconcilable with 'proper' anarchism has been influential in some quarters. In *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* Bookchin argues that lifestylism is an expression of anarcho-individualism, and derides it as 'petty-bourgeois exotica'[133] and a 'middle-class trend of … decadent personalism'[134] – these same terms are echoed in other workerist attacks on lifestylism, especially against CrimethInc., as discussed above. Crucially, Bookchin argues that anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism, with their 'socialist pedigree,' are *fundamentally distinct* from lifestylism. He argues that 'there exists a divide that cannot be bridged unless we completely disregard the profoundly different goals, methods, and underlying philosophy that distinguish them.'[135] 'Lifestylists,' he argues, '*are no longer socialists.*'[136] This is important, because it goes beyond criticising lifestylism for its ineffectuality and places it firmly in the enemy camp.[137]

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[132] Wilson, *Biting the Hand*, p. 1

[133] Murray Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism. An unbridgeable chasm*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1995), p. 7

[134] Ibid. p. 2. George McKay writes that 'Murray Bookchin's recent scathing attack on lifestyle politics is only slightly marred by an uncomfortable sense of an old man railing against youth for being young, for having fun.' (George McKay, 'DiY Culture,' in *DiY Culture*, pp. 25, 26). Bob Black also accuses Bookchin of 'grumpy old man syndrome.' (Bob Black, *Anarchy After Leftism*, (Colombia, Missouri: Colombia Alternative Press Library, 1997), quoted in Davis, 'Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unhelpful Dichotomy,' p. 63)

[135] Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, p. 54

[136] Ibid. pp. 1, 2, [emphasis added]

[137] Lucien Van der Walt and Michael Schmidt describe Bookchin's polemic as 'a powerful critique of these [lifestylist] currents,' but go even further than this in *Black Flame. The Revolutionary Class Politics of*

Bookchin does not discuss punk directly in his tract against lifestylism, but many of his comments might obliquely be applied to punk (such as when Bookchin discusses 'Halloween artwork,'[138] 'bad poetry and vulgar graphics,'[139] perhaps), and as mentioned the terms in which Bookchin argues are echoed in attacks against lifestylism, which themselves include criticisms of association with punk. As Jeppesen notes: 'subcultural component[s]' of the anarchist movement, including punk, are often conflated with 'what Murray Bookchin deridingly calls "lifestyle anarchism".'[140] The debate around lifestylism is of significance for the punk scene – as was clearly evident in the case studies – and the manner in which critics and punks think about lifestylism serves to tell us a lot about the wider relationship between punk and anarchism.

So, even though Bookchin doesn't deal with punk explicitly, the arguments he sets out against lifestylism are often redirected at punk. One of Bookchin's key criticisms is that lifestylism is very easily co-opted by capitalism. He writes that '[t]he counterculture that once shocked the petty bourgeoisie with its long hair, beards, dress, sexual freedom, and art has long since been upstaged by bourgeois entrepreneurs whose boutiques, cafés, clubs, and even nudist camps are doing a flourishing business.'[141] Portwood-Stacer notes that this aspect of Bookchin's polemic is of crucial importance in other critiques of lifestylism too: 'Some people take the position that if a practice of style is co-optable by the market or compatible with state policy, then it *must* not be radical (and maybe never was), and by extension should not be supported by authentic anarchists.'[142]

So in addition to its (damning) association with lifestylism, punk is also implicated in Bookchin's critique in its vulnerability to recuperation by capitalism. As mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, some forms of punk are highly commercialised and willingly function within capitalist markets and recreate capitalist social relations – to repeat, not all punks are anarchists. However, DIY punk explicitly and vigorously rejects this co-operation with capital, as was highlighted in each of the case study contexts. Those who dismiss punk as lifestylist might assert that DIY punk is in fact frequently co-opted, or simply operates along the same capitalist commodity exchange principles in miniature, and presents no threat to capitalist social relations whatsoever. The following section will examine whether Bookchin's terms of attack can in fact be reasonably directed at punk, by discussing DIY punk ethics and production practices in relation to the issue of lifestylism, and especially the issue of co-optation by capital.

Anarchism and Syndicalism, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009), arguing that Bookchin makes 'a mistake' by even so much as 'conceding [lifestylists'] place in a larger anarchist tradition.' (p. 71)

[138] Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, p. 55

[139] Ibid. p. 57

[140] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 25 (footnote)

[141] Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, p. 27

[142] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 47

- **DIY punk**

Holtzman, Hughes and Van Meter define DIY in explicitly anti-capitalist terms: 'DIY is the idea that you can do for yourself the activities normally reserved for the realm of capitalist production (wherein products are created for consumption in a system that encourages alienation and nonparticipation).'[143] Craig O'Hara asserts that '[t]he ethos of Punk business has been "do-it-yourself." This is an extension of … anarchistic principles.'[144] O'Hara's term 'punk business' is interesting, but he is clear that DIY is an expression of anarchist politics. Martin-Iverson also asserts the anarchistic underpinnings of DIY, and considers 'DIY production [as] a form of anarchist prefigurative politics, aimed at the active production of alternative social values rather than simply making demands or expressing opposition.'[145] However, Michelle Liptrot argues that within punk 'DIY is an ambiguous concept, which comprises various positions on a spectrum ranging from those committed to non-profit-making to those who aspire to receiving financial reward.'[146] Despite frequent claims of opposition to capitalist social relations, Liptrot argues that DIY punk 'is neither entirely void of commerce nor completely autonomous.'[147] Interviewee Endang, in Indonesia, who is involved with a prominent DIY label, acknowledged that:

Fig. 6.6 – Merchandise for sale at a gig at Przychodnia, Warsaw.

> the meaning of DIY has many definitions, but for us as a record label it mean[s] that we us[e] hardcore punk alternative media to distribute what we've made, such as band[s'] records. And not submitting to the mainstream media [such] as television or big radio … We [are] using *punk distribution*, stool to stool, distro to distro.[148]

So Endang identifies a clear opposition to mainstream, commercial distribution and media networks. This could correlate with an anti-capitalist impetus – though this might not *necessarily* be the case,

[143] Holtzman et al, 'Do It Yourself,' in *Constituent Imagination*, p. 44
[144] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 166
[145] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 10
[146] Michelle Liptrot, '"Punk belongs to the punx, not the business men!" British DIY punk as a form of cultural resistance,' in *Fight* Back, p. 235
[147] Liptrot, '"Punk belongs to the punx",' in *Fight Back*, p. 233
[148] [emphasis added]

as will be explored further below. Interviewee Jon, in the UK, who operates a DIY distro, was also conscious of an ambiguity around understandings of DIY in punk:

> The term DIY is so abused, and misused. Y'know, I used to say there's DIY and then there's American DIY … Which is very unfair on the Americans obviously, but there are so many … people who seem to think that DIY is fine if you do it yourself, which means you can be an outright fascist capitalist bastard, treat people like shit, just be in it for yourself, or just y'know sell whatever rubbishy, sexist bands there are, y'know, as long as you're doing it DIY. And that's crap.

Despite acknowledging other interpretations of DIY in punk, Jon was clear that DIY *ought to* equate with anti-capitalism:

> DIY is about an alternative, you do things because you want to do things different, and you want to show things are different, and your goals are different. So there's no point in just emulating capitalist ways and means, and mores and whatever, just because 'oh, I'm doing it myself,' 'cause you could say Mr. Ikea is DIY, y'know he set up the business himself and still runs it. No, DIY is … about doing things without the intention of ripping people off.

Fig. 6.7 – 'Totally Exploited,' 'Turning Rebellion Into Money.' Detail from Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008).

As discussed in the case studies, the issues of pricing and profit-making are key points on which discussion of DIY hinges. As Liptrot mentioned, some interpretations of DIY punk allow for profit-making, while others oppose it completely. Jon also emphasised that:

> actually trying to put all those values which are important to you into the way you do things, it's not always easy. Any kind of 'business' isn't, but that's why I've kept the distro … so we're not taking any money out of it, 'cause that's quite important to me. Although, it doesn't mean you can't do a DIY thing without that, but … it's a very important line, as far as I'm concerned.

The 'important line' of profit and price will be discussed in more detail below. But the key issue here is that DIY is often ambiguously understood, and its opposition to capitalism is not always clear-cut. DIY is understood as 'anarchistic' by O'Hara, but the term 'punk business' generates a tension – and

this tension is identified by DIY distributors such as interviewees Endang and Jon. Stacy Thompson describes this tension as 'a fundamental contradiction between an anticommercial impulse constitutive of punk and punks' necessary trafficking in the commodity market.'[149] Thompson's analysis is bogged down in Hegelian-Marxist dialectical 'contradictions' (as mentioned in the introduction), but his key question is incisive – 'Can the commodity form be taken up and used against capitalism?'[150]

It must also be stressed that DIY punk practitioners often understand *their own* activities as anarchist. Interviewee George in the UK argued that DIY 'happens to sort of correspond with a lot of anarcho principles.' McKay quotes the Desperate Bicycles demystification of the production processes behind their first single ('Smokescreen') as an example of the self-consciously political motivations behind even some of the earliest DIY punk practices. They reveal the complete production breakdown and cost of their first single (£153) as encouragement for others to the same: 'It was easy, it was cheap, go and do it.'[151] Beyond the realm of production politics, Jeppesen identifies DIY as an 'ethic of self-determination.'[152] Boff Whalley of Chumbawamba highlights the anarchistic dynamics *within* the band: 'We believe in "equal pay, equal say". There are no leaders … We organise as a collective, making all decisions not by voting but by debate and discussion. This means we've never had any disagreements and fall-outs over power and money.'[153] So the anarchist impetus in DIY punk extends beyond production practices into organisation, decision-making processes, propagandising and so on.

Fig. 6.8 – Prejudice Me, DIY benefit label and distro, Manchester, UK.

However, in response to the accusation that lifestylism (and therefore, by association, punk) is not 'proper' anarchism, this section will focus on DIY punk production, discussing the ways in which DIY can be (and has been) co-opted by capitalism, as well as examining DIY punk's ability to resist capitalist recuperation. Against the accusation of embodying petit-bourgeois capitalism, DIY will be shown to be anti-capitalist *and* consistent with anarchism, and even to have strong comparative

[149] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, pp. 81, 82
[150] Ibid. p. 3
[151] The Desperate Bicycles, 'The Medium was Tedium'/'Don't Back the Front,' (Refill Records, 1977), as quoted in McKay, 'DiY Culture,' in *DiY Culture*, p. 25
[152] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 29
[153] Boff Whalley, 'Anarchism and Music: Theory and Practice,' in *Arena Three*, p. 78

similarities and overlaps with anarcho-syndicalism. This exploration of DIY punk in relation to a range of anarchist approaches will also contribute to the collapsing of the lifestylist/workerist dichotomy, which is the focus of this chapter, and informs the wider discussion of the relationships between punk and anarchism.

- *Co-optation and sell-outs*

As Kevin Dunn notes: 'A great deal of energy is spent in homemade zines, in letters to *Maximumrocknroll*, on Internet chatboards, and in curbside [*sic*] conversations about whether punk bands that sign to a major record label are "selling out."'[154] As shown in the case studies, the issue of selling-out extends beyond bands' dalliances with corporate labels to include: bands asking for too much money to play gigs; gig promoters charging too much; gig promoters accepting sponsorship of gigs; distros or labels seeking profit; t-shirt and patch printers making a living from their 'punk business.' As the term 'sell-out' suggests, transgressors are considered to have abandoned or betrayed the DIY ethic (and community) in return for financial gain. Tim Yohannan, founding editor of *MaximumRockNRoll* zine defines a sell-out as both 'somebody who purports to be one thing and then changes … [such as] a political band that signs to a major label and then rationalises it' but *also* 'people that never purported to be political … In a way, I think they're even bigger jerks.'[155] As noted above, DIY is often viewed as an explicitly political practice, as such Yohannan considers that 'if you choose to participate in [corporate capitalism] for your own individual gratification, you're a sell-out in my eyes.'[156] Yohannan here identifies two types of sell-out – those who espouse DIY and/or anarchist politics, but end-up becoming involved with corporations (usually under the excuse of getting their message to a wider audience), and those who do not spout any 'political' rhetoric whatsoever, so see no issue with corporate involvement anyway. Selling-out also takes more subtle forms. There are a significant number of ostensibly 'independent' punk labels which have relationships with corporate labels for the purposes of distribution, usually through an intermediary 'indie' label, so involvement with one of these labels is de facto involvement with the corporations, and therefore a kind of sell-out by proxy.[157] It is also deemed

[154] Dunn, '"If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk",' p. 232
[155] Tim Yohannan interviewed by Scott M. X. Turner, 'Maximising Rock and Roll,' in *Sounding Off!* pp. 182, 183
[156] Ibid. p. 183
[157] Alan O'Connor points out the connections between a whole raft of US punk labels (largely drawn from information in *MaximumRockNRoll*) such as Epitaph, Fat Wreck, BYO, Southern, Punk Core, Side One Dummy, Sub Pop, Nitro, Victory, and Bridge Nine through what are described as 'Indie Distribution Companies' such as Fontana, ADA, RED, and Caroline, who are actually fronts for major labels – Universal, Warner, Sony BMG, and EMI respectively (though EMI was 'absorbed' by Sony and Universal in 2012, leaving the 'big three' record labels), (O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*, p. 36, table 3.1). So a record purchased

possible to be a sell-out without engaging with the major labels, by being perceived as reproducing the normative practices or values of the corporate music industry – especially in terms of making profit and employing alienated labour. As was particularly expressed in the case study interviews, people are accused of being sell-outs for charging too much for gig admission or commodities (records, CDs, t-shirts, patches etc.).[158] Indeed, the gig as the key central aspect of any punk scene is most often the focus of discussions over 'selling-out' – this is also recognised by O'Connor as an issue going back to the 1980s.[159] A form of selling-out that was an issue in Indonesia, but not the UK or Poland, was corporate sponsorship of gigs, especially by cigarette companies. As mentioned in the case studies, interviewee Mr. Hostage in Indonesia described this as a 'new way of marketing.' Yohanes, also in Indonesia, said:

> sponsor[s have] become a problem … everywhere … If we have sponsors, maybe, we are under control. We're under control like major label control. They can do whatever they want, and that's why we don't have any sponsor because we're on our own. DIY, pure DIY.

The issue of control is important. Engaging with corporate capitalism in the guise of major labels, cigarette sponsors, or corporate events companies often means loss of artistic control – but it *always* means loss of economic control. As Jeppesen puts it, enaging with 'corporate production or control … be[ing] co-opted or recuperated by the mainstream … takes the powerful message out of

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from Fat Wreck profits Sony BMG. A record bought from Epitaph profits Warner Music Group. Southern Records acts as a distributor for Crass Records, Alternative Tentacles and Dischord, but Southern are owned by Universal (via Fontana 'indie'), so these labels are implicated in corporate interests as well. There is a deliberate attempt here to create distance, obfuscation even, between the consumer, the 'punk label,' and the corporations.

[158] Additionally anyone who attempts to assert intellectual property rights is also branded a sell-out, which is contemporarily pertinent in terms of internet file-sharing, but goes back to cassette recording and tape distros as well. A recent point of contention in this respect was Crass's row with the anarcho-punk.net website, which among thousands of other anarchist punk downloads hosted links to numerous Crass records, and others on the Crass Records label. Crass, via Southern Records (i.e. Universal Records, as above) and in particular a person named Alison, filed copyright complaints with the file hosting site mediafire.com and as a result more than 2000 downloads were removed from the anarcho-punk.net website, resulting in Crass being branded 'capitalist traitors.' See: 'Crass: Capitalist traitors using copyright laws against Anarcho-Punk.Net – 3000 albums deleted because of these greedy selfish sellout bastards,' (18th July 2012), http://www.anarcho-punk.net/viewtopic.php?f=6&t=8983 [accessed 29th January 2016]; and ToytownScum, 'Crass: Capitalist traitors using copyright laws against Anarcho-Punk.Net,' (2nd August 2012), http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2012/08/498572.html?c=on#c285706 [accessed 29th January 2016]

[159] O'Connor writes: 'Much of the discussions about bands "selling out" in the 1980s was not about record labels but about bands playing over-priced shows and demanding large guarantees. For critical commentary on this see "What the Fuck," interview with MDC in *Maximumrocknroll* no. 42, November 1986, 4 pages. And interview with BGK, *Maximumrocknroll* no. 43, December 1986, 2 pages. It was alleged that big bands such as Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Circle Jerks and Bad Brains were asking for as much as $3,000 to $6,000 per show.' (O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*, p. 22)

punk (or anarchism, protest, hip-hop etc.) and sells it back to people, emptied of its former meaning.'[160] As O'Connor notes, this is more than just an ethical or ideological defeat:

> If successful bands simply leave this underground for the major labels the autonomy of the entire field is weakened. Imagine if these bands instead used their popularity to strengthen independent labels and their distributors, independent promoters and community space, zines and the whole punk underground.[161]

In material terms, the 'alternative economy' that DIY punk represents is damaged when participants sell-out – which helps to explain why the issue remains a major issue of discussion and debate in punk scenes around the world. In the cases where punks do sell-out, Bookchin's accusation that lifestylism is easily co-opted by capital is obviously applicable. However, selling-out is an uncommon occurrence in punk scenes, as will be discussed below. Most punk bands, labels, gigs promoters, producers generally, are DIY whether driven by ethos or plain necessity. But as discussed above, 'being DIY' provides no guarantee against replicating capitalist social relations – which is recognised by many as a form of selling-out too.

- *DIY punk as 'small capitalism'*

Beyond being co-opted by capital in the guise of major record labels or cigarette corporations, there is an accusation that DIY punk actually just recreates capitalist business models and capitalist social relations, albeit on a smaller scale. Punk producers are viewed as (or even view *themselves* as) petit-bourgeois entrepreneurs – indeed, as mentioned in the case studies, interviewee Yohanes in Indonesia described 'being *entrepreneurs* of T-shirt printing' as a 'positive thing.'[162] Rather than challenging capitalism, William K. Carroll and Matthew Greeno write that sub-cultures such as punk only serve to provide more markets: 'Each subculture and identity group offers a niche market to corporate capital. As market principles invade culture they absorb and commodify the voices of subjugated groups within the chain of production and consumption.'[163] As evidence of the pervasiveness of capitalist norms, Sean Martin-Iverson, discussing the Indonesian punk scene in particular, argues that '[w]ith the growing commercialisation of the scene, punk autonomy has been harnessed to a neoliberal, entrepreneurial independence which reproduces precariousness and class

[160] Jeppesen, 'The DIY post-punk post-situationist politics of CrimethInc.,' p. 29
[161] O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*, p. 24
[162] [emphasis added]
[163] William K. Carroll and Matthew Greeno, 'Neoliberal Hegemony and the Organization of Consent,' in *Managing Democracy, Managing Dissent. Capitalism, Democracy and the Organisation of Consent*, Rebecca Fisher (ed.), (London: Corporate Watch, 2013), p. 123

exploitation within the scene.'[164] Sibille Merz argues that the proliferation of neo-liberal capitalist social relations in the form of 'enterprise men and women'[165] (as DIY punk entrepreneurs are recognised by Martin-Iverson) 'is a paradigm of indirect social control.'[166] Interviewee Eka, also in Indonesia, recognised this as a problematic issue, saying, '[t]hey use the word DIY only because they do their own business, but it's for their own personal needs … but not in terms of [a] wider understanding of DIY.' And as mentioned in the case studies, Eka echoes Merz's point to argue that this is because 'they've been really constantly terrorised with … *the definition of needs that's created by the capitalists*.'[167]

So rather than sell-out by engaging with corporate capitalists, these for-profit DIY producers reproduce capitalist social relations themselves – they become capitalists. As CrimethInc. phrase it: 'like the magnate in miniature … [they] ha[ve] to internalise the logic of the market, taking its pressures and values to heart.'[168] Scott M. X. Turner posed a similar point to Tim Yohannan:

> [Turner]: Let me put a devil's advocate question to you. While I agree that independence is the way to go, isn't this whole *Book Your Own Fuckin' Life*,[169] start-your-own-label-and-distribution-network process a case of little capitalist cells in the making?
>
> [Yohannan]: Yes. Right now, it's not an argument between let's say capitalism and socialism, or capitalism and anarchism. It's between capitalism and petty-bourgeois capitalism. And that's the best we can do at the moment.[170]

Even though DIY punk is engaged in a battle 'to keep the corporate fuckheads away,'[171] it does not challenge capitalism, and is identified by Yohannan as petit-bourgeois and explicitly not anarchist or even socialist. This strongly echoes the terms of Bookchin's denigration of lifestylism.

So, from this critical perspective, because DIY punk bolsters capitalism by creating new, niche markets for commodities, and because the DIY ethic is easily recuperated into the neo-liberal subjectivity in the form of small-scale entrepreneurs, it represents fundamentally flawed aspects of

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[164] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 6
[165] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), p. 28
[166] Sibille Merz, 'Reforming Resistance: Neoliberalism and Co-option of Civil Society Organisations in Palestine,' in *Managing Democracy, Managing Dissent*, p. 138
[167] [emphasis added]
[168] CrimethInc., *Work*, p. 88
[169] *Book Your Own Fuckin' Life* was a DIY Resource Guide for punk bands. The third edition (print form) from 1994 is available online here: https://archive.org/details/BookYourOwnFuckinLife3 [accessed 29th January 2016] and the website version, last updated in 2011, remains accessible here: http://www.byofl.org/search.php [accessed 29th January 2016]
[170] Scott M. X. Turner, 'Maximising Rock and Roll,' in *Sounding Off!* p. 188
[171] Ibid.

lifestylism. As Portwood-Stacer writes: 'For some anarchists, the risk of co-optation is enough to render lifestyle politics *untenable as part of anarchist strategy*'[172] – and DIY punk, as described above, is at risk of co-optation and has been co-opted in some cases. However, DIY punk retains an expressedly anti-capitalist ethos in *most* cases, and even though DIY punk certainly engages in commodity exchange, it is arguable that because profit is generally eschewed that this does not in fact replicate capitalist economic or social relations.

- *Resistance to co-optation and opposition to capitalism*

Transgressions against the anti-capitalist ethos of DIY punk (in the form of selling-out) are identified by the wider DIY punk community as problematic and are met with repercussions. A prominent example is Chumbawamba, who emerged from the UK anarcho-punk scene but signed to a major label in 1997 (EMI), sparking outrage from their former comrades and fans. Chumbawamba member Boff Whalley writes that:

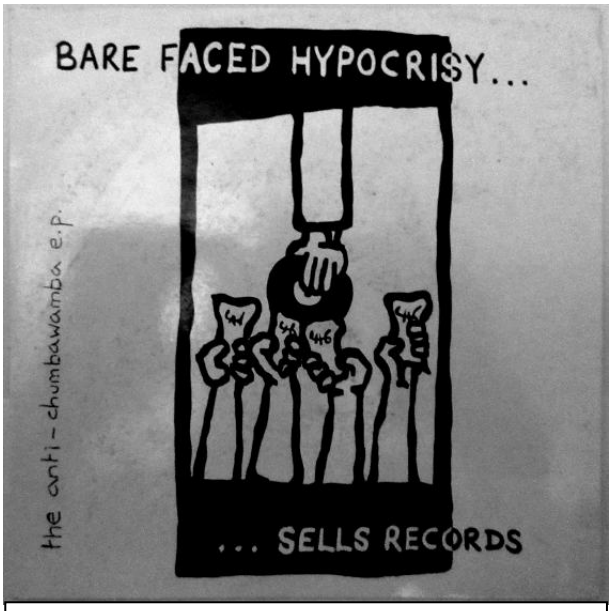

Fig. 6.9 – *Bare Faced Hypocrisy Sells Records. The anti-Chumbawamba E.P.* (Propa Git, 1998).

> The history of anti-Chumbawamba rhetoric from self-described anarchists would fill half my house … Sell outs! How dare you claim to be anarchists and yet participate in the consumerist commodification of art! There's even an EP of songs available about the band featuring songs with choruses of 'Chumbawamba, you're shit!'[173]

The US band Against Me! also have their roots in the DIY punk scene and were actually physically attacked after signing with Fat Wreck Chords in 2003 (which as detailed above is distributed by major label Sony BMG). The band went on to sign with a more openly major label imprint in the form of Sire records in 2005, but it was signing to Fat Wreck (from the independent label No Idea)

[172] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 47, [emphasis added]
[173] Whalley, 'Anarchism and Music,' in *Arena Three*, p. 80. The record in question is titled *Bare Faced Hypocrisy Sells Records/The Anti-Chumbawamba EP*, (Ruptured Ambitions, Propa Git, 1998). Oi Polloi are usually credited with bringing the project together.

that generated the biggest reaction. According to Against Me!'s vocalist Laura-Jane (known as Tom at the time of the comments), *MaximumRockNRoll* columnist Bill Florio:

> was saying that [our fans] should come to the shows and pour bleach on our T-shirts and merch – just this insane ranting and raving in his columns, saying that we were the fucking devil … there was this one dude – Frank was his name – and while we were playing, he'd gone out and slashed our tyres. They weren't even trying to hide it that they did it. They were just like, 'Yeah, we fucking slashed your tires, you fucking sellouts.'[174]

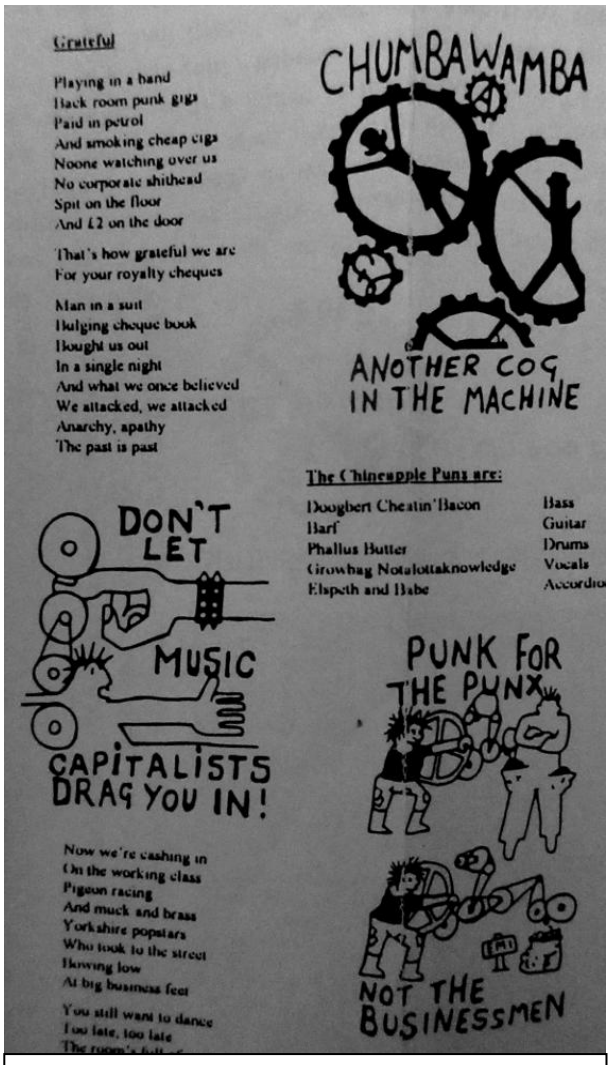

Fig. 6.10 – Detail from the lyric sheet of *Bare Faced Hypocrisy Sells Records. The anti-Chumbawamba E.P.* (Propa Git, 1998).

In the prominent cases of Against Me!, and especially Chumbawamba (who were openly critical of major labels, including EMI, and explicitly criticised sell-outs[175]), the sell-out is particularly clear cut, since these bands came from punk scenes explicitly engaged with anarchism, and following their sell-outs their music became notably commercialised and the radical content of their songs was largely discarded.[176] But the vociferous reaction from the DIY punk scene is clear – sell-outs are

[174] Tuyet Nguyen, 'Punk Sell Out? Against Me! would rather make a statement than starve,' (9th May 2007), http://www.clevescene.com/cleveland/punk-sell-out/Content?oid=1498514 [accessed 29th January 2016]

[175] To quote Chumbawamba: 'I've too often heard rebel bands excuse their participation with big business labels by saying "we'll get across to more people." I'd be interested to discover exactly what they'll get across and to whom. Turning rebellion into cash so dilutes the content of what they're saying that I no longer think they're saying anything. At least the stars who peddle shit and shit alone are up front about being in it for the money. When being in it for the money is being dressed up as politics, I feel like I'm being cheated on two levels instead of just plain patronised by crass music.' Chumbawamba in *Threat By Example* zine, no. 31, quoted in O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 154. A Chumbawamba song, 'Heartbreak Hotel,' also appears on the *Fuck EMI* compilation (Rugger Bugger, 1989)

[176] Arguably, Chumbawamba returned to their anarchist roots after being dropped by EMI, and they certainly donated significant sums of money to anarchist projects including the 1in12 Club in Bradford. Against Me! on the other hand rejected their past radicalism, even to the extent of writing a song titled 'I was a Teenage Anarchist' (on the album *White Crosses*, (Sire, 2010)).

heavily criticised, boycotted, and in extreme cases even come under physical attack.

Fig. 6.11 – Back cover of *Bare Faced Hypocrisy Sells Records. The anti-Chumbawamba E.P.* (Propa Git, 1998).

The most common attempt to justify selling-out by anarchist and DIY punk bands is that the corporate platform enables them to get 'the message' to a wider audience – but as O'Connor notes, the oft-cited potential to make a bigger impact politically is misguided: 'Bands that move to bigger labels with the excuse that they are helping to get the word out are *completely mistaken*.'[177] In many cases bands who signed with major labels found to their cost that the arrangement was not as desirable as it first seemed, with numerous bands being exploited in flashes of corporate interest in punk, and duly discarded when the hype had ebbed away again.

But of course, most bands will never have the 'opportunity' to sell-out – DIY is a necessity for most punks. Major label interest in punk, where it has existed at all, has been very short-lived and sporadic, so aside from the very few bands who might have had an option to sell-out, most bands, labels, promoters and distributors are DIY because that is the only option. Most punk music and scenes are of little commercial interest to the corporate music industry. As Thompson puts it, for example: 'Black Flag did not need to avoid commercialisation; commercialisation avoided the band.'[178] However, DIY is also a firmly ingrained culture and ethos that is consciously adopted and supported for explicitly political reasons. Steven Taylor views the DIY ethic as an 'element of resistance to corporate co-optation'[179] in punk, and that 'the partial recuperation of it fostered a renewed commitment among many musicians and fans to sustaining a politically committed alternative strain.'[180] Thompson views DIY, even in instances motivated primarily by necessity, as a 'material signifier of [a] desire to resist commercialisation.'[181] So DIY punk represents a *conscious* alternative to the mainstream music industry's attempts at co-optation, even if most punks will never encounter attempted seduction by the corporate music industry anyway. This is driven by an explicitly anti-capitalist ethic. As Thompson notes, for many punks: 'the corporate music industry

[177] O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*, p. 51, [emphasis added]
[178] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 33
[179] Taylor, *False Prophet*, p. 34
[180] Ibid.
[181] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 43

stands in for the whole of capitalism, for it is when they confront the major labels' business practices, music, and bands that punks best understand themselves as opposed to capitalism.'[182] But as noted above, Thompson also recognises a tension between this anti-capitalism and DIY punk production and exchange of commodities – and this tension is key.

As Portwood-Stacer notes: 'The DIY principle can be, and is, applied to almost everything anarchists consume,'[183] but this also applies to certain production practices, especially within DIY punk. Despite producing and distributing commodities, DIY punk practices are often able to challenge, or at least subvert, capitalist social relations and market logics. Further, this is argued to be consistently anarchist, as reflected in the anarchist mutualism/cooperativism advocated by the likes of Proudhon,[184] or more recently, Ward.[185] Fredy Perlman writes:

> In capitalist society, creative activity takes the form of commodity production, namely the production of marketable goods, and the results of human activity take the form of commodities. Marketability or saleability is the universal characteristic of all practical activity and all products.[186]

DIY punk engages with this dynamic by producing and distributing commodities, which are saleable and are marketed. As discussed above, and in the case studies, the price of punk commodities is often a central focus. As Perlman recognises, in Marxian terminology: 'Price is St. Peter's key to the gates of Heaven … [because as t]he capitalist sells the products of labour on a market; he [*sic*] exchanges them for an equivalent sum of money; he [*sic*] realises a determined value.'[187] 'The difference between the total value of the products and the value of the labour spent on their production is surplus value, the seed of Capital,'[188] but crucially however:

> if the value of the commodities were merely equal to the value of the labour-time expended on them, the commodity producers would merely produce themselves, and

[182] Ibid. p. 4
[183] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 31
[184] As Alex Prichard writes: 'Proudhon advocated a gradualist (r)evolution which involved "getting the association into operation."' (Referencing K. Steven Vincent, *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and the Rise of French Republican Socialism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 146). Prichard continues that this is to be 'achieved through the socialisation of title through worker cooperatives and trade and communal federations.' (Alex Prichard, 'The Ethical Foundations of Proudhon's Republican Anarchism,' in *Anarchism and Moral Philosophy*, Benjamin Franks and Matthew Wilson (eds.), (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), p. 108)
[185] See: Colin Ward, *Anarchy in Action*, (London: Freedom Press 1996 [1973])
[186] Fredy Perlman, *The Reproduction of Daily Life*, (Detroit, Michigan: Black & Red, 2002 [reprint of 1969 *Kalamazoo* issue]), p. 4
[187] Ibid. p. 14
[188] Ibid. p. 16

> their society would not be a capitalist society; their activity might still consist of commodity production, but *it would not be capitalist commodity production*.[189]

So in the DIY punk fascination with price there is a direct challenge to capitalist economic relations, even in the form of buying and selling commodities. Profit and surplus value are key determinants, and these are often exactly the terms in which DIY punk evaluates whether a punk producer or band is authentically DIY or a sell-out. Interviewee Jon, above, emphasised the issue of profit as 'an important line' in DIY punk. As Martin-Iverson puts it: 'to be properly DIY one must … *eschew the pursuit of profit*.'[190] Thompson, discussing the anarcho-punk fanzine *Profane Existence*, notes that:

> whenever possible *PE* does not demand that consumers exchange their wages, their dead and abstract human labour, for the zine. *PE* thereby attempts to resolve the conflict between Anarcho-Punk and the commodity, on a local level, by giving away what it could have opted to sell.[191]

Aside from giving away commodities for free, another interesting way of dealing with price is 'Prix Libre' or 'pay what you want.' In this way, by refusing to demand even a minimum price, the value of the commodity is divorced from its production process (materials and labour cost) and tied instead to the consumer's ability to pay and their own personal valuation (or valuing) of the commodity. This is part of what Thompson terms an 'intentional distancing of punks from profit,'[192] which renders DIY 'business' ventures as 'a failure in commercial terms and a success in punk terms.'[193] But punks aren't just inept capitalists – their 'commercial failure' is framed in explicitly anti-capitalist terms.

A consequence of this is that DIY punk production (as a band, label, distro, gig promoter, etc.) is viewed as 'a passion rather than a job.'[194] As Thompson notes: 'Punks often consciously divorce themselves from punk as a career, where the word suggests the manner in which a person is willing to exchange his or her labour in order to survive economically.'[195] As such, DIY punk production can be viewed as 'a challenge to alienated labour,'[196] which Martin-Iverson marks as an 'especially' important aspect to being genuinely DIY.[197] Interviewee Yohanes in Indonesia intimated this

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[189] Ibid. p. 15, [emphasis added]
[190] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 10, [emphasis added]
[191] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 108
[192] Ibid. p. 150
[193] Ibid.
[194] O'Connor, *Punk Record Labels and the Struggle for Autonomy*, p. 80
[195] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 150
[196] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 11
[197] Ibid. p. 10

motivation, arguing that DIY punk producers, who 'maybe … just make stuff for their own bands or their friends' bands, make stickers, t-shirts, and so on, they think they can make some money from there' which is contrasted with the other option of 'hav[ing] to work in a factory, basically.' The choice to be a DIY punk producer, engaged in unalienated labour, is contrasted with alienated labour in the factory setting. However, as will be discussed below, because DIY punk is not a paying job, people are obliged to engage in alienated labour anyway, *in addition to* their unalienated labour in punk.

So, DIY punk is expressedly anti-capitalist, with transgressors (sell-outs) being actively shunned, and despite engaging in the production and distribution of commodities, DIY punk production practices eschew profit and alienated labour, and as such can be viewed as practically embodying the anti-capitalist ethos they espouse. Indeed, the form of self-employed artisanship that DIY punk represents has been a key concern in anarchist political philosophy from Proudhon's mutualism onwards,[198] as expressed more contemporarily by the likes of Colin Ward. Though this 'entrepreneurial subjectivity' is unfashionable in many anarchist circles, Ward celebrates 'a different kind of typical anarchist' in the form of 'the operators of small businesses.'[199] Ward argues that these people 'far from being would-be capitalists, were explicit *rejecters* of the capitalist ethic.'[200] Indeed, Class War, who were generally argued to correlate quite closely with the workerist caricature, include 'many of the self employed' in their definition of the working class (in *Unfinished Business*).[201] So DIY punk can be understood as consistently anti-capitalist *and*, contrary to Bookchinite criticisms, tenable with (at least some varieties of) anarchist politics.

- *Comparisons between DIY punk and anarcho-syndicalism*

While this rescues DIY punk from accusations of being 'not anarchist,' it leaves the workerist/lifestylist dichotomy intact. As Martin-Iverson puts it: 'DIY punk is an attempt to escape from alienation by living creatively and producing outside the wage system, *rather than confronting*

[198] Later 'classical' anarchists such as James Guillaume or Peter Kropotkin argued against cooperativism in explicitly anarcho-communist terms – to quote Guillaume: 'In the new society, there will be no more commerce, in the sense attached to that term today' (Guérin (ed.), *No Gods, No Masters*, p. 255). Bakunin was more equivocal, arguing on the one hand that 'Bourgeois weapons, being none other than unrestrained competition, the warfare of each against all, propriety won at the cost of ruination to others, these weapons, these methods can serve only the bourgeoisie and would of necessity put paid to solidarity, the proletariat's only strength,' but also that 'cooperative undertakings [are] in many respects necessities' and '[i]t is to be wished that, when the time for social liquidation comes, every country and every locality should boast lots of cooperative associations.' (Guérin (ed.), *No Gods, No Masters*, pp. 213-214)

[199] Ward and Goodway, *Talking Anarchy*, p. 165

[200] Ibid.

[201] Class War Federation, *Unfinished Business*, p. 58

capital directly in the workplace.'[202] For anarchists who reflect the workerist caricature then, DIY punk *still* fails to meet their definition of 'proper' anarchism. However, to take the argument further, it is possible to draw several strong comparisons between DIY punk and key anarcho-syndicalist principles. As discussed above, Bookchin considers anarcho-syndicalism to be an example of 'proper' or 'social' anarchism, and it reflects many aspects of the workerist caricature discussed above – so by making a case for DIY punk's 'workerist credentials,' the premise of the workerist critique of DIY punk is pulled away, and with it the entire workerist/lifestylist dichotomy.

As was evidently clear in the case studies, punks (or ex-punks) have frequently been involved with explicitly workplace-focussed groups – often the IWW[203] but also anarcho-syndicalist groups. Interviewee Szymon in Poland recognised 'a huge split down between the subcultural thing and union or syndicalist thing,' but emphasised the practical overlap between these supposedly oppositional anarchisms:

> I can say that there will be no trade unions, syndicalist trade unions, if there will be no punks … There is a criticis[m of] the punks, that they are sitting on the squats and drinking beer, that's true, also. But … if somebody need some help, they go to the squat and the help is waiting for them … *They are connected very highly*.[204]

Similarly, Jack Kirkpatrick and Erik Forman both acknowledge that punks have been prominent in the re-emergence of the IWW in recent decades. Forman describes an 'amalgamation of rebel rank-and-filers, dissident staffers and officers, radical left activists, *punk rockers*, and angry workers [who] began coalescing to rebuild the legendary Industrial Workers of the World [in the 1990s].'[205] Kirkpatrick describes the IWW as a 'scrappy little *DIY* union,'[206] which strongly echoes Geoffrey Ostergaard, writing in *Anarchy* journal in 1963, who described the anarcho-syndicalist

[202] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak Punk*,' p. 11

[203] While not explicitly anarcho-syndicalist, the IWW is recognised as an overlapping group with similar philosophies and practices. As Albert Meltzer puts it: 'Though not syndicalist in name (the U.S. Government criminalised syndicalism with the IWW in mind) it was so in fact.' (Meltzer, *First Flight*, p. 9). Marcel van der Linden identifies the IWW as distinct from syndicalism because of their 'centralist' structure. (Marcel van der Linden, 'Second thoughts on revolutionary syndicalism,' posted by Joseph Kay, (15th February 2011), http://www.libcom.org/library/second-thoughts-revolutionary-syndicalism-marcel-van-der-linden [accessed 27th January 2016])

[204] [emphasis added]

[205] Erik Forman, 'Revolt in Fast Food Nation: The Wobblies Take on Jimmy John's,' in *New Forms of Worker Organization: The Syndicalist and Autonomist Restoration of Class-Struggle Unionism*, Immanuel Ness (ed.), (Oakland: PM Press, 2014), p. 212, [emphasis added]

[206] Jack Kirkpatrick, 'The IWW Cleaners Branch Union in the United Kingdom,' in *New Forms of Worker Organization*, p. 246

implementation of direct action as a 'grass-roots, *do-it-yourself* kind of action.'[207] Ostergaard's writing predates Forman and Kirkpatick by more than fifty years – and is of course written pre-punk – but the centrality of the DIY ethic to workplace-focussed activism is clear. It is arguable that the basic similarity in approach between DIY punk and anarcho-syndicalism is part of what makes it so easy for people to go from one to the other, or to be involved *in both*, as was the situation described by many of the interviewees in the case studies.

Martin-Iverson, discussing the Indonesian DIY punk scene, clearly observes a similar parallel:

> Perhaps the most significant aspect of the class politics of punk is not their identification with the working class but their commitment to autonomous 'Do-It-Yourself' forms of cultural production. In this capacity they are enacting a *prefigurative* politics of praxis, as workers struggling against the imposition of work.[208]

This understanding of a prefigurative model of production, even if limited to *cultural* production, draws a clear similarity with classically anarcho-syndicalist emphases. Tom Brown, a prominent anarcho-syndicalist organiser in the UK of the mid-twentieth century, describes prefiguration's role in anarcho-syndicalist practice: 'We must develop the class-consciousness, the knowledge and self-confidence of the workers, until the embryonic society bursts the shell of capitalism,'[209] and, quoting the IWW preamble: 'By organising industrially we are forming the new society within the shell of the old.'[210] Brown's focus has similarities to the workerist caricature in its focus on class-consciousness and the primacy of workers and the workplace in struggle, but the core philosophical underpinning of prefigurative production politics is clearly observable in anarcho-syndicalism *and* in DIY punk.

Of course, prefiguration is a common thread across most (probably all) anarchisms. Portwood-Stacer argues that lifestylist consumption practices are prefigurative because they:

> *signify* an opposition to the kinds of lifestyles encouraged by the bourgeois consumer culture … And when they do consume in similar *material* ways to mainstream consumers, they often *discursively* frame their consumption activities as contra to the overall system of consumer capitalism.[211]

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[207] Geoffrey Ostergaard, 'The Relevance of Syndicalism,' in *Anarchy*, no. 28, (June 1963) in *A Decade of Anarchy 1961-1970: selections from the monthly journal Anarchy*, Colin Ward (ed.), (London: Freedom Press, 1987), p. 141

[208] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 10, [emphasis added]

[209] Brown, *Syndicalism*, p. 19

[210] Ibid.

[211] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 26

So here, consumption is viewed as a prefigurative approach towards social revolution, because new modes of economic relation and exchange (as consumers) are being constructed within, or parallel to, bourgeois capitalist frameworks, that will eventually replace capitalist relations entirely. Production and consumption are two sides of the same coin,[212] and this is explicitly recognised by Brown, who in his syndicalist propaganda pamphlets describes the consumer boycott as 'a mighty weapon' whereby employees engaged in struggle can be supported when the 'workers are organised to withdraw patronage of certain chain stores, cinemas, cafes, or branded goods.'[213] Brown here limits the boycott to a particular employer in a specific struggle, but does recognise its successful deployment in the campaigns of the Irish Land League of the late-nineteenth century, which employed the tactic on a wider scale. Brown writes that boycott tactics are 'best applied to those trades relying on the workers' purchasing power,'[214] which effectively means *any* business selling a product or service. In close parallel with Brown, but arguing for an explicitly *lifestylist* approach, Portwood-Stacer uses the term 'consumer strike' to describe '[a]nti-consumption which occurs under the aegis of a strike or boycott … [I]f enough individuals withdraw their resources from the system of corporate capitalism, that system will eventually "have a real battle on its hands".'[215] This boycott tactic can be identified in DIY punk as well – punks do not purchase corporately produced music, and even the records of punk bands who release through major labels are shunned by DIY punks, as detailed in cases such as Chumbawamba and Against Me!, above. In the same frame of logic, the corporate sponsored gigs are boycotted by DIY punks in Indonesia. DIY punk withdraws its productive labour *and* consumption from the corporate music industry, and many punks also engage in the kind of wider boycotts described by Portwood-Stacer as a lifestylist tactic.

Despite the strong parallel with Brown, consumption is not a typical anarcho-syndicalist focus[216] – but DIY punk has also seized (at least a small portion of some of) the means of production. Echoing the prefigurative emphasis above, but with specific reference to production, Thompson identifies within punk 'the seeds of a society in which collectives own the means of production and produce for non-commercial ends.'[217] CrimethInc. exhort their readers to 'seiz[e] all the means of production

[212] To quote Proudhon: 'In reality as in economic science, producer and consumer are always one and the same person, merely considered from two different viewpoints.' (Guérin (ed.), *No Gods, No Masters*, p. 73)
[213] Brown, *Syndicalism*, p. 12
[214] Ibid.
[215] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 40, quoting 'the words of one commenter on an anarchist email list I followed.'
[216] Although, as another example, Hubert Lagardelle favourably compares the educational power of 'occupational syndicates … on the terrain of production' with 'the cooperatives in the realm of consumption.' Hubert Lagardelle, *Syndicalism*, posted by Alias Recluse, (14th September 2011), http://www.libcom.org/library/syndicalism-hubert-lagardelle [accessed 27th January 2016]
[217] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 78

you can get your hands on,'[218] and in terms of distribution, DIY punk has achieved *some* success in wresting these means into punks' own hands. Brown discusses 'Workers' Control of Distribution'[219] in *Syndicalism*, discussing shops and shop assistants in particular. In Brown's (propagandistic) imagining of economic relations in an anarchist society, commodities are of course still being produced and consumed. Brown asserts that producers 'like producing different kinds, and new models, of goods' and that '[g]oods, as now, will be produced in great variety.'[220] He argues that supply and demand will help direct the type and quantity of goods production:

> Now if some goods are unpopular, they will be left on the shelves to be devoured by mice and moths or embalmed by spiders. Of other goods more popular, the shops will be emptied. Surely it is obvious that the assistant will decrease his [*sic*] order of the unpopular line and increase his [*sic*] order of the popular.[221]

So these commodities are distributed in a market, and the 'market force' of supply and demand is at work – but in the absence of profit this is a (*really*) free market.[222] The close linkage of consumption and production, and the continued distribution of commodities is apparent. Another core principle of anarcho-syndicalism is economic decentralisation,[223] and as Jon Savage notes the 'promise of decentralisation'[224] has been a key aspect of punk since its earliest incarnations. As CrimethInc. put it: 'Underground punk bands released their own records and established their own venues, *setting up an alternative economy* based on "do-it-yourself" networks and anticapitalist values'[225] – the economic relations described in Brown's anarcho-syndicalist propaganda, and elsewhere, are realised (to at least some extent) in DIY punk. Thompson argues that 'to avoid co-optation and death, a punk scene must establish an independent economic base,'[226] and DIY punk has successfully done so (to a limited degree) in the field of distribution. Thompson terms this a form of 'economic resistance'[227] against capitalism – but inevitably, the totalising influence of capitalist social relations is not easily side-stepped. DIY punk's successes are *necessarily* limited.

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[218] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 2, p. 3
[219] Brown, *Syndicalism*, p. 53
[220] Ibid. p. 55
[221] Ibid.
[222] Brown does not envisage any money being used in commodity exchange, writing: 'it should be obvious that no libertarian and equalitarian society could make use of money. Syndicalism, as well as ending the wages system, also aims at the destruction of money relationships.' (Ibid. p. 45)
[223] See, for example: Brown, *Syndicalism*), p. 33; Rudolf Rocker, *Anarcho-Syndicalism*, (Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 1989 [1938]), p. 90; Hubert Lagardelle, *Syndicalism*, n.p.
[224] Savage, *England's Dreaming*, p. 417, quoted in McKay, *Senseless Acts of Beauty*, p. 75
[225] CrimethInc., *Work*, p. 325
[226] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, p. 52
[227] Ibid. p. 147

- *Limitations*

As repeatedly intimated above, punk's successes in penetrating and challenging the capitalist economy are limited. Firstly, the vast majority of the means of production (including distribution) are still held firmly by capitalists. As interviewee Jon in the UK stated: 'the important factor here is that we don't own the means of production. We don't own the means of the actual resin, or the stuff which you made these things [records, CDs, tapes] from.' While there are many hundreds (or even thousands) of punk distributors and labels, there are very few punk record pressing plants (as just *one* example, Ameise pressing plant in Hamburg[228]), and even here they are obliged to purchase raw materials, machinery, energy and delivery services from capitalist, often corporate, companies. A 'vertically integrated' economic approach[229] for DIY punk would entail taking over the means of production, right down to the oil rigs which extract the raw materials for vinyl records and plastic CDs, and the refineries, and the delivery trucks, and so on up the production chain. In terms of punk gigs, bands spend thousands of pounds on instruments and amplification, all produced by capitalist companies with exploited, alienated labour, and the electricity consumed to power amplifiers and speakers is produced by capitalist corporations.

Secondly, despite eschewing profit themselves, DIY punk producers and distributors cannot escape the alienated labour carried in the running costs of their 'punk businesses.' DIY producers usually at least aim to break even, but the profit realised in the non-punk production detailed above, through the exploitation of alienated labour, is retained even in the minimal pricing of punk commodities.

Thirdly, because DIY punk producers eschew profit they are obliged to engage with alienated labour outside the punk scene to earn a living, and often to fund their DIY punk practices. If DIY punk producers were to give commodities away for free or at a loss, this still wouldn't erase the capitalist relations (producer profit, alienated labour) contained in the vinyl or t-shirt material, the cost of which would be borne by the producer personally, almost inevitably with money paid from their own exploited labour at their 'day job.'

In short, capitalism cannot be simply side-stepped. Punk's successes in seizing the means of production are limited and marginal. As AK Thompson notes: 'DIY ethics must come to terms with the fact that – at present – it primarily represents people's *intention* to become direct producers. In truth, most of what actually gets "produced" remains representational in character.'[230] Stacy Thompson concedes that 'neither the aesthetic nor the economic practices of [anarcho/DIY punk] …

[228] See: http://amei.se/ [accessed 29th January 2016]
[229] A 'punk corporation,' perhaps?
[230] AK Thompson, *Black Bloc White Riot*, p. 22

fully succeed, if success means a complete, if local or temporary, overthrow of the capitalist mode of production.'[231] As Perlman writes, the kind of anti-capitalist production represented by DIY punk: 'can *only* [be done] marginally; men's [*sic*] appropriation and use of the materials and tools available to them can only take place after the overthrow of the capitalist form of activity.'[232] And from the anarcho-syndicalist perspective as well, Lagardelle highlights the fundamental weakness of marginal economic resistance to capitalism: 'it is only by seizing the instruments of labour, by making itself the *exclusive* owner of the factories, workshops, etc., that [the working class] will assure its emancipation.'[233]

But to criticise DIY punk for not singlehandedly overthrowing the entire capitalist edifice is plainly unfair. As Stacy Thompson writes, DIY punk's revolutionary shortcomings are '[n]ot surprising.'[234] These limited successes of punk are still manifestly anti-capitalist *and* anarchist – DIY punk is a 'modest attempt at a sustainable and partial autonomy.'[235] As anarcho-syndicalist Emile Pouget puts it, struggling workers 'do not rest upon their laurels and miss no chance to *win partial improvement* which, being achieved at some cost to capitalist privileges, represent a sort of partial expropriation and pave the way to more comprehensive demands.'[236] The partial improvements that DIY punk has been able to achieve should not be dismissed simply because they do not achieve a complete overhaul of the economy and society, and even on the workerist caricature's own terms this criticism does not hold water.

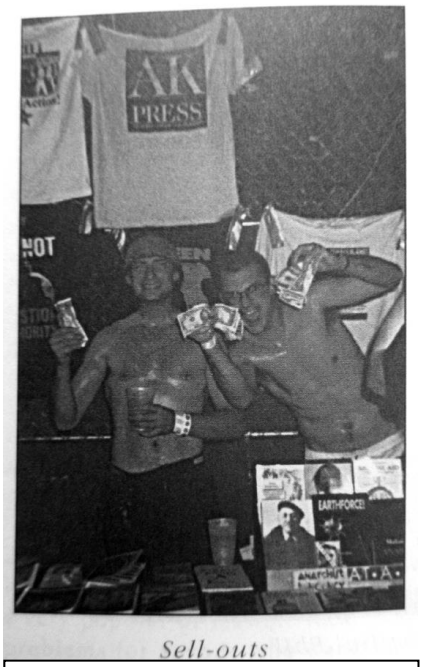

Fig. 6.12 – Detail from Craig O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*. AK Press stall at a punk gig, with Murray Bookchin's *Social Anarchism* or *Lifestyle Anarchism* visible at the front.

It is not argued here that DIY punk is the same as anarcho-syndicalism, nor any other reflection of the workerist caricature, only that the critiques of lifestylism and DIY punk from those quarters do not stand-up, even in their own terms. Bookchin's dismissal of lifestylism as being easily co-opted by capitalism and therefore not anti-capitalist so not 'proper' anarchism (and others' redirection of that dismissal towards punk), is evidently false.

[231] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, pp. 81, 82
[232] Perlman, *The Reproduction of Daily Life*, p. 11, [emphasis added]
[233] Hubert Lagardelle, *Syndicalism*, n.p.
[234] Thompson, *Punk Productions*, pp. 81, 82
[235] Martin-Iverson, '*Anak punk*,' p. 10
[236] Pouget, *Direct Action*, p. 7, [emphasis added]

- **Collapsing the dichotomy**

It is an interesting point that the publisher for Bookchin's *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, AK Press, was started by a punk. Craig O'Hara's *The Philosphy of Punk* contains a picture of an AK Press stall being run by O'Hara and Ramsay Kanaan at the back of a punk gig. In a little stand at the front of the stall is *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*,[237] Bookchin's face peeping-out between the punk paraphernalia. And despite identifying some of the terms of critique which have been borrowed from Bookchin to attack lifestylists, a key criticism of *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* is that it doesn't actually discuss any existing manifestations of lifestylism at all. Laurence Davis describes 'Bookchin's straw man account of lifestyle anarchism in the 1990s [as] misguided and politically unhelpful,'[238] relying on 'entirely one-dimensional and derogatory terms':[239]

> The targets of his polemic – ranging from the individualist anarchism of the philosopher L. Susan Brown to the mystical writings of Hakim Bey to the primitivism of George Bradford and John Zerzan – are idiosyncratic and diverse, and it is not immediately clear why he chooses to focus on the writings of these particular individuals rather than the practice-oriented anarchist movement that none of them claim to represent.[240]

As was intimated in the description of the lifestylist caricature above, Bookchin's own writings from the 1970s are centrally concerned with the revolution of the self and of everyday life. Even in *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, which is purportedly so anti-lifestylist, he writes that he 'would be the last to contend that anarchists should not live their anarchism as much as possible *on a day-to-day basis – personally as well as socially, aesthetically as well as pragmatically*.'[241] He defends the 'anarchic counterculture' of the early-1960s as 'often intensely political,'[242] and in fact, Bookchin is at pains to distance himself from a dry workerist caricature as he writes:

> For my own part, as the author of 'Desire and Need' some thirty years ago, I can only applaud Emma Goldman's demand that she does not want a revolution unless she can dance it – and, as my Wobbly parents once added early in this century, one in which they cannot sing.[243]

[237] O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk*, p. 162. Ironically the two people running the stall are waving dollar bills and the picture caption reads simply: 'Sell-outs.'
[238] Davis, 'Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unhelpful Dichotomy,' p. 62
[239] Ibid. p. 77
[240] Ibid. p. 70
[241] Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, p. 60, [emphasis added]
[242] Ibid. p. 9 (footnote)
[243] Ibid. p. 3

As Davis suggests: 'Bookchin quite consistently advocated a variety of *revolutionary* personalism inspired by the libertarian communist tradition.'[244] The distinctions between the lifestylist and workerist caricatures simply do not stand up to scrutiny, and dissolve on closer examination. Rudolf Rocker refutes the accusation of dry materialism from an anarcho-syndicalist perspective:

> In the processes of capitalistic giant industry labour has become soulless and has lost for the individual the quality of creative joy. By becoming a dreary end-in-itself it has degraded man [*sic*] into an eternal galley slave and robbed him [*sic*] of that which is most precious, the inner joy of accomplished work, the creative urge of the personality.[245]

In fact this loss of 'fun,' this turning of life into bleak drudgery, is what anarcho-syndicalists are struggling to overcome. Rocker argues that 'we have forgotten that industry is not an end in itself but only a means to assure to man [*sic*] his material subsistence and make available to him [*sic*] the blessings of a higher intellectual culture.'[246] Even for the supposed workerists, work is not the be-all-and-end-all. In typically lifestylist terms, Errico Malatesta writes that 'it is only natural that anarchists should seek to apply to their *private lives* and party life, this very same principle upon which, they hold, the whole of human society should be founded.'[247] Emile Pouget's pamphlet, *Direct Action*, which propagandises for anarcho-syndicalism, overlaps with lifestylism as well. In it he emphasises a shift from 'theory and abstraction' to 'practice and accomplishment,' and argues that 'direct action is the class struggle *lived on a daily basis*, an ongoing attack upon capitalism.'[248]

With 'workerists' espousing 'lifestylist' ideas and vice versa, it should by now be clear that the dichotomy is plainly false. As Portwood-Stacer notes: 'rather than participating in *either* lifestyle activism *or* radical dissent, many anarchists do both, and do not see attention to their lifestyles as separate from their concerns with altering state power and mounting strategic protest.' As such: 'Anarchists bridge a divide between cultural movements which are oriented toward personal change and political movements which are oriented toward social change.'[249] So they reflect aspects of both the lifestylist and workerist caricatures – effectively making each redundant, which was also the conclusion drawn in examinations of Class War and CrimethInc., and DIY production practices, above. Interviewee Adam in the UK, a long-time anarcho-syndicalist activist (and punk), spoke on this theme:

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[244] Davis, 'Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unhelpful Dichotomy,' p. 74
[245] Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 253
[246] Ibid. p. ix
[247] Errico Malatesta, 'On the Necessity of Organisation. *Anarchiè et organisation*' (1927), in *No Gods, No Masters*, Guérin (ed.), p. 353
[248] Pouget, *Direct Action*, p. 7, [emphasis added]
[249] Portwood-Stacer, *Lifestyle Politics*, p. 6

> There was a discussion about anarchism and lifestylism in Organise! [an anarcho-syndicalist group] … and some people became dead-set against this whole 'aw no, punk-anarchy, that's lifestylists … oh, no, this has to be about class' and all the rest of it … I think anarchist politics primarily has to be about class, it's class politics. It's about exploitation, it's about the people that can change society are working class people. But the point that was made here was like, working class people do not all conform to one particular lifestyle choice … While we should make sure we never confuse anarchist politics with a lifestyle choice, it's also making sure that, y'know, you don't end up in the position of calling people lifestylists and just telling them to fuck off. Because some of these people have been, and are, the same sorts of people that are most interested in anarchism … *they're not mutually exclusive*. Now, some people can adopt the lifestyle, lots of people do, the whole punk rock thing and the DIY ethos and that's it, that's as far as it goes, and that's fair enough … If you decide to dismiss the whole lifestyle you dismiss alotta people that might be open to your ideas, and open to anarchist politics. Now, I think the appeal has to be broader than to just those people, but *you don't have to cut those people off* … to broaden that out.[250]

Despite occupying an explicitly anarcho-syndicalist perspective, Adam echoes Portwood-Stacer here – lifestyle and activist involvement (even workerist forms) are not mutually exclusive. The barriers erected between them have been shown to be theoretically flimsy, and shattered in the numerous overlaps between these supposed polar opposites in practice, as demonstrated again and again in the case studies. To return to the 'punky' anarchist groups discussed above: Class War write that '[t]he only kind of politics worth anything is that which breaks down barriers';[251] while CrimethInc. assert that '[a]ll dichotomies are constructs, useful only for what they bring out when used to frame the infinity of existence. If you want to get to the bottom of a dichotomy, you have to begin by asking what it offers those who use it.'[252] So it should be asked *why* this particular dichotomy is used to dismiss punk, and why some people are so troubled by punk's association with anarchism.

Fig. 6.13 – Detail from Sanctus Iuda, *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995).

[250] [emphasis added]
[251] *Class War*, no. 73, p. 8
[252] CrimethInc., *Contradictionary*, p. 185

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the relationships between anarchism and punk in the contemporary contexts of the UK, Poland, and Indonesia. It has made an original contribution in terms of: its novel antinomous approach; its opening up of a hitherto underexplored set of relationships; an extensive amount of new primary empirical information; and a challenging theoretical analysis of the issues identified in the course of the research. To return to the three audiences identified at the start of the thesis: the Anti-punk Anarchists have been shown that the relationships between punk and anarchism run very deeply indeed and in complex ways – this ought not to be dismissed so offhandedly, even if punk continues to offend their aesthetic preferences; The Academy has been shown that the imposition of simplified narratives to punk is misguided and *misguiding* – it is hoped the generally positive developments in 'punk academia' continue, and that this thesis might be a part of that development; the Anti-academic Punks have been shown that serious, rigorous investigation into their scenes *can* be achieved in a non-exploitative fashion, and that this contributes to punk's own critical self-analysis, which has always been an integral part of the scene's ability for renewal and longevity.

The issues identified and explored in this thesis *matter*. They matter to me, and, as demonstrated in the opening anecdote describing the initial spark for this research, as identified in the various schisms and tensions throughout the case studies, as made clear in the rancorous polemics and ranting online tirades, these issues matter deeply to many anarchists and punks. As CrimethInc. put it:

> Anarchists have a singularly contentious relationship with the subculture that spawned so many of us. Offhand dismissals of punk as alienating, insular, and hopelessly co-opted are de rigueur; the notion that punk in itself might be something worthwhile strikes the average ex-punk anarchist *as laughable*.[1]

Adrian, an interviewee in Poland, discussed this theme. While he accepted that, as a punk, it might be 'a good strategy … to change your image' for some forms of activism he also argued:

> That doesn't necessarily have to mean, which often happens, that you absolutely dismiss the DIY scene, the punk scene, because that's not what people naturally do, right? I mean you can be yourself right, you can go there to [a] workers' conference, whatever, and then

[1] CrimethInc., *Rolling Thunder*, no. 7, p. 70, [emphasis added]

> after this there is no problem for you to go to a punk show. Or there is no reason for you to go and tell those punks in the street that they should wear proper clothes, cut their hair, and find a job. And some people get too much I think in this direction.

The overlap between punk and a whole myriad of anarchist activisms, often typically 'lifestylist' but also including workplace struggles, was repeatedly made apparent in the case studies, and the theoretical discussion in Chapter 6 renders any theoretical workerist/lifestylist distinction null – so of course Adrian is right that there should be no problem to be at a workers' conference *and* attend a punk gig. But as he points out there is a tendency for some anarchists to reject punk, and as CrimethInc. acknowledge, more often than not, these criticisms come from 'ex-punk anarchists.' Adam in the UK identified precisely this phenomenon:

> I've seen … people who have come into anarchism … through some sorta of like y'know punk and that. And they've been stood supporting workers on picket lines, and they're being berated by somebody five or six years older than them for being vegetarian: 'that's just a fuckin' lifestyle choice.' I'm sorry, that's not the place for this, actually that argument has no place. It especially doesn't have a place if you're supporting workers in struggle, and yis are both stood there to do that. To me it's just blatant ignorance, and y'know, discomfort of where they've come from themselves being projected onto somebody else. Someone's vegetarian, somebody's into animal rights … and they're still out there supporting industrial dispute … that's what it's fucking about. And people shouldn't be made to feel like wankers for that. Maybe the particular organisation you're in is more about supporting workers in struggle, but you don't put off people who are into other issues as well.
>
> I really do get the sense that that comes from that, 'oh my god, I was a stupid punk,' or 'I was a stupid straight-edger, aw I'm scundered[2] now. Aw this person is a bit of a punk, I'm gonna slabber[3] at them.' While, y'know … they're doing exactly what you think everybody should be fuckin' doin'.
>
> They're being *prole-ier than thou*.[4]

The psychological implications of this projection of personal discomfort, even embarrassment, onto others is far beyond the scope of analysis of this thesis, but it is clear that the 'lifestylist versus

[2] Embarrassed
[3] To be verbally abusive
[4] [emphasis added]

workerist' antagonism, though played-out by some anarchists, is poorly grounded in reality, and is only of detriment to the wider anarchist movement.

As detailed in the case studies, in the discussions of CrimethInc. and Class War, and in the analysis of DIY punk, the supposedly opposing positions of 'lifestylist' and 'workerist' have a great deal in common, to the extent that the dichotomy completely collapses. This has been made clear in terms of the relationships between anarchism and punk, but equally applies in consideration of the wider anarchist movement.

The overarching framework of antinomy comes to the fore again here. Like the false paradoxes of Hegelian-Marxist dialectics, singular and linear narratives have no grounding in lived experience. Similarly, differing approaches to activism and philosophy within the anarchist pantheon should not be conceived as opposing sides of a simplistic dichotomy. Rather, these variations of activist emphasis should be recognised as part of a diverse range of ideas and tactics within, as Kanaan terms it, a 'river of ideas'[5] – a *spectrum* of anarchisms. Interviewee Adam, while embodying an overlap between punk and anarcho-syndicalism (or lifestylism and workerism to resurrect the dichotomy), sums-up the productive tension:

> Anarchism can't just be about counter-culture or punk, but at the same time, I will describe myself as a punk. I'm also working class and I'm also an anarcho-syndicalist, y'know, these things *are definitely not mutually exclusive*. The challenge for anarchism is to get out of that sorta subcultural scene, without basically going 'fuck you, yous are all wankers.'

So, in the spirit of antinomy, 'lifestylist' versus 'workerist,' 'cultural' versus 'political,' 'punk' versus 'proper' can and should be viewed as *productive* tensions. To re-quote from the introduction: 'Out of these antinomies, their conflicts and precarious equilibrium, comes growth and development; *any fusional resolution or the elimination of one of the terms would be the equivalent of death*.'[6] These tensions are what gives the anarchist movement vibrancy, and it is along these tensions that it develops and evolves. Perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, if these tensions didn't exist, there would have been very little to write about …

[5] Ramsay Kanaan interviewed in Biel, *Beyond the Music*, p. 75
[6] Morgan, 'Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Proudhon,' p. 301, citing Proudhon, *Théorie de la propriété*, p. 52, [emphasis added]

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Crass, *Reality Asylum/Shaved Women*, (Crass Records, 1979)

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Krass Kepala, *7 Pesan Pendek*, (DIY, 2010)

Krass Kepala, *Total Destruction*, (Disarmament records, 2009)

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Various, *Fuck EMI*, (Rugger Bugger, 1989)

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Various, *Aceh Revolution*, (Rusty Knife Records, Guerilla Vinyl, Folklore De La Zone Mondiale, Keponteam, Svoboda Records, Ronce Records, 2013)

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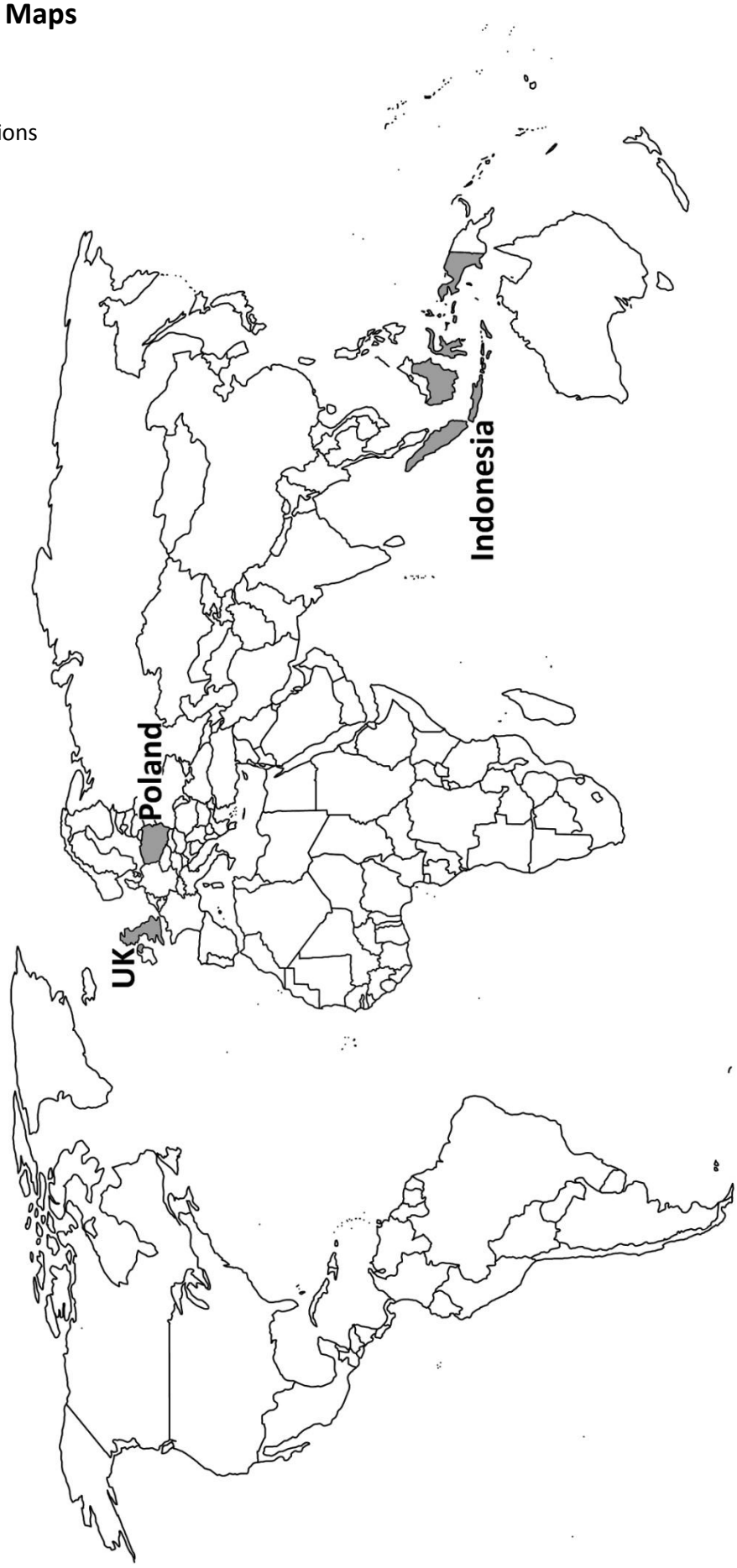
Zudas Krust, *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011)

Appendix 1 – Maps

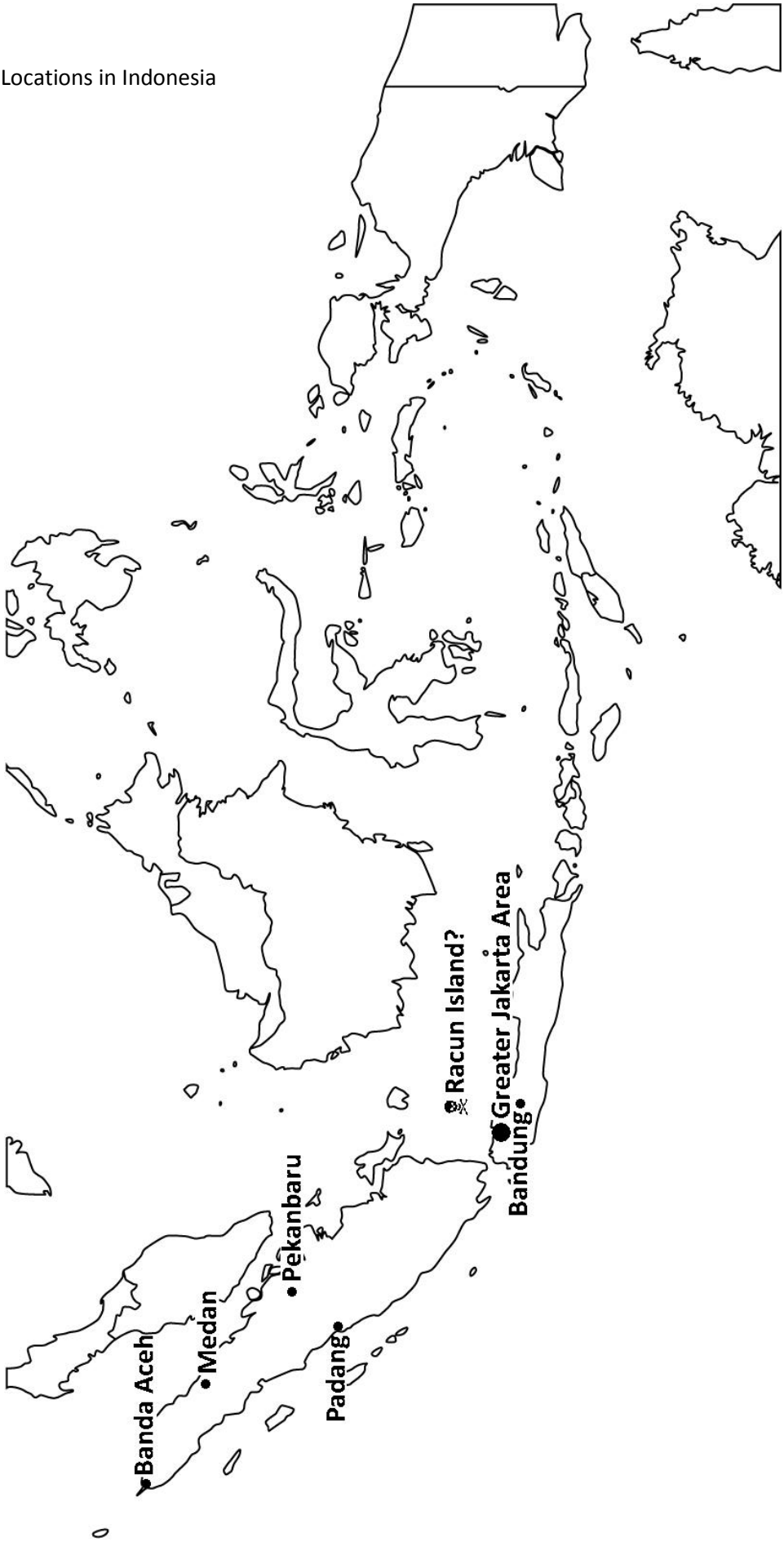
Map A

Case Study Locations



Map B

Case Study Locations in Indonesia



Map C

Case Study Locations in Poland

Map D

Case Study Locations in the UK

Appendix 2 – Interviewees

Total: 50 interviews (Indonesia: 21, Poland: 16, UK: 13), 72 respondents (Indonesia: 21, Poland: 18, UK: 17), (18 women, 54 men)

Key: Pseudonym (gender) – Date of interview(s) – Location of interview – Any additional info.

Indonesia: 21 interviews, 37 respondents (6 women, 31 men)

Arief (m) – E-mail 'chat' interviews 23/02/2013 & 19/03/2013 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx

Denny (m) – 26/09/2012 – Jakarta

Septian (m) – 26/09/2012 – Jakarta – Member of several street punk and Oi! bands

Haliim (m) – 26/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of a Thrash punk band

Reza (m) – 26/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of a Thrash punk band

Firmansyah (m) – 26/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of a Thrash punk band

Aulia (w) – 26/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Originally from the US

Dian (w) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx

Zaqi (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Member of a D-Beat band

Yoga (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Member of a D-Beat band

Bagus (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Member of a D-Beat band

Taufan (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Member of a D-Beat band

Gilang (m) – 27/09/2012 & 28/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx and co-founder of Riotic distro and *Submissive Riot* zine

Mike (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Tourist from the UK

Putri (w) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx – Member of a punk band, and formerly lived in New Zealand

Rifqi (m) – 27/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx

Dimas (m) – 29/09/2012 – Jakarta

Endang (m) – 30/09/2012 – Jakarta – Involved with prominent DIY label

Mr. Hostage (m) – 25/09/2012 – Jakarta – Formerly lived in Hawai'i

Aditya (m) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Member of Raw punk/grind band

Nadya (w) – 28/09/2012 – Bandung – Member of Bandung Pyrate Punx

Eka (w) – 30/09/2012 – Depok – Member of InstitutA

Budi (m) – 30/09/2012 – Depok – Member of InstitutA

Hengki (m) – 04/10/2012 – Medan – Abductee from Banda Aceh in December 2011

Yandi (m) – 04/10/2012 – Medan – Abductee from Banda Aceh in December 2011

Susanto (m) – 04/10/2012 – Medan – Interviewed with group of street punx

Ridwan (m) – 04/10/2012 – Medan – Interviewed with group of street punx

Handoko (m) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Interviewed with group of street punx – Abductee from Banda Aceh in December 2011

Jaya (m) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Interviewed with group of street punx

Bambang (m) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Interviewed with group of street punx

Surya (m) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Interviewed with group of street punx

Vina (w) – 25/09/2012 – Tangerang – Interviewed with group of street punx

Agus (m) – 29/09/2012 – Jakarta

Yohanes (m) – 29/09/2012 – Jakarta

Indra (m) – 01/10/2012 – Medan

Teuku (m) – 03/10/2012 – Banda Aceh – Gig promoter

Felix (m) – 01/10/2012 – Medan – Member of hardcore band and gig promoter

Poland: 16 interviews, 18 respondents (5 women, 13 men)

Kasia (w) – 15/05/2013 – Poznań – Member of Rozbrat squat

Artur (m) – 16/05/2013 – Poznań – Member of Rozbrat squat – Member of hardcore/metal band

Paulina (w) – 17/05/2013 – Poznań – Member of Rozbrat squat – Member of *Ogólnopolski Związek Zawodowy Inicjatywa Pracownicza*

Mateusz (m) – 18/05/2013 – Poznań – Member of Odzysk squat

Natalia (w) – 19/05/2013 – Poznań – Member of *Federacja Anarchistyczna*

Grzegorz (m) – 21/05/2013 – Warsaw – Member of *Związek Syndykalistów Polski*

Bartek (m) – 21/05/2013 – Warsaw

Dawid (m) – 24/05/2013 – Warsaw – Formerly lived in London

Szymon (m) – 24/05/2013 – Warsaw

Marta (w) – 25/05/2013 – Warsaw – Member of Syrena squat

Adrian (m) – 25/05/2013 – Warsaw – Member of Przychodnia squat

Pawel (m) – 27/05/2013 – Warsaw – Member of Przychodnia squat (former member of Elba squat)

Rafa (m) – 27/05/2013 – Warsaw – Member of Przychodnia squat – Member of post-punk band

Dominik (m) – 31/05/2013 – Wrocław – Operates DIY label

Krzysztof (m) – 02/06/2013 – Wrocław – Member of Wagenburg squat

Kinga (w) – 23/12/2013 – London – Former member of prominent punk band in Warsaw

Wojtek (m) – 28/05/2013 – Warsaw

Tomek (m) – 28/05/2013 – Warsaw

UK: 13 interviews, 17 respondents (7 women, 10 men)

Jack (m) – 14/08/2013 – Glasgow – Member of Industrial Workers of the World (former member of Class War Federation)

Adam (m) – 28/08/2013 – Belfast – Member of Solidarity Federation (formerly known as Organise! in Ireland)

Jon (m) – 19/09/2013 – London – Operates DIY label/distro

Chloe (w) – 19/09/2013 – London

Sonia (w) – 20/09/2013 – London – Formerly lived in Poland

Isabelle (w) – 05/10/2013 – Belfast – Involved in Pro-Choice activism

Liam (m) – 06/10/2013 – Belfast – Member of Warzone Collective – Gig promoter – Member of street punk/D-beat band

Nathan (m) – 06/10/2013 – Belfast – Member of Warzone Collective

Ryan (m) – 08/10/2013 – Belfast – Former zine producer – Former member of Warzone Collective and Organise!

Oisín (m) – 19/10/2013 – London – Member of punk band

Tommy (m) – 19/10/2013 – London – Gig promoter – Member of punk band

George (m) – 24/11/2013 – Manchester – Zine producer

Megan (w) – 17/12/2013 – Brighton – Gig promoter

Liz (w) – 18/12/2013 (with e-mail addendum, also 18/12/2013) – Warwick – Member of Riot Grrrl band

Grace (w) – 18/12/2013 – Warwick – Member of Riot Grrrl band

Katie (w) – 23/12/2013 – London – Member of prog-punk band

Sam (m) – 23/12/2013 – London – Member of prog-punk band

Appendix 3 – International Compilations and Split Records

Several records, tapes and CDs have been released as cooperative 'splits' between Indonesian and international bands. For example:

Krass Kepala from Bandung released a split 7" record and cassette with Die Wrecked from the UK (*Solidaritas Internasional* (Die Rex [UK], Bandung Pyrate Punx records [Indonesia], Jobsworth [Ireland], Mass Prod [France], Pumpkin Records [UK], 2013))

KontraSosial released a split CD with Warstruck from Sweden (Black Seeds Records [Malaysia, though formerly based in Ireland], 2012)

Milisi Kecoa from Bandung released a split CD with HårdaTider from Sweden (Kecoa Marah, Trueside, WHMH, Alternaive, Epidemic, Delusion of Terror, Subhatkor, Rock and Rebel, Doombringer, [all SE Asian labels] 2012)

Proletar from Jakarta released a split 7" with Greber from Canada (Selfish Satan [Canada], 2012)

Total Anarchy released a split with Fucktard from the US (Resurrection Records [USA], 2012)

Krass Kepala and Projekbabi released a split CD with two Australian bands, Deathgrenade and The Craw (*Noisy Goreng*, (Nukufear, Live Fast Die Drunk Records, [Australia], c. 2010)

Injakmati from Jakarta released a split 7" record with Black Sister from Scotland (*Rotten Conspiracy* (NeverHeard Distro [Hungary], Power Negi Records [UK], Problem? [UK], Alcoholic Desaster [Greece], Subwix [Germany], Urgent Freedom Records [unknown], 2009)

The *Riot Connection* compilation CD features 10 Indonesian Oi! bands alongside 13 German Oi! bands (Warrior Records, Riot Connection Records, [Germany], c. 2008

The *Total Fuckin' Pogo* compilation tape has 12 Indonesian bands alonsgside 2 German bands, 2 Dutch bands, a Czech band, and an English band (Stay Punk Records [Indonesia], 2005)

A review of some Polish records, CDs and tapes reveals a mixed picture in terms of international connections. There are clear international ties in terms of split releases with bands from other countries (though fewer than by Indonesian bands) and international labels helping to release Polish

bands' music. However, from the records reviewed, Polish bands actually seem to do a relatively small number of splits with international bands. Examples include:

Government Flu's split with Poison Planet from the USA, *Government Poison E.P.*, (Refuse Records, 2013)

The Bold and Beautiful's split with Tunguska from Ireland (Trująca Fala, Sadness of Noise, Teleports Records, 2006)

Interviewee Dominik, who runs a DIY label in Poland, noted that there have been a 'few records of Polish bands that were … released by labels from Germany, from France, from United States even.' (Interview conducted 31/05/2013). Examples of Polish bands involved with international labels/distros include:

Utopia's *Niee* (2010) which was co-released (alongside Polish label Trująca Fala) by Mass Prod Distribution who are based in Brittany, France

The 12" vinyl version of Meinhof's *8 Drops of Blood* (2010) which was co-released (alongside Polish label Carmaba) by Bomb This Shit Recordings from Germany and Active Rebellion from the UK

Stracony's *Uważajcie – Bomby Wisza Nad Waszymi Głowami* (2000) which was released by Tribal War Records from the US

The 2000 rerelease of Post Regiment's self titled album (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2000) which was distributed by Active Distribution from the UK

Post Regiment's final album *Tragiedia wg Post Regiment* (Profane Existence, Skuld, 1998) which was co-released by Profane Existence from the US

The 12" vinyl version of PESD's *Politikårepoizonëkurvæ* (2006) which was released by Prank Records from the US

Baraka Face Junta's self-titled album (Trująca Fala, Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2010) which was distributed by Active Distribution from the UK

Appendix 4 – Anarchist Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK

Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008). Circled-A in band logo.

Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011). Circled A on lyric sheet. Autonomads logo incorporates circled-A as well.

Autonomads, 'The (A) Word,' *One Day All This Will Be Gone*, (Pumpkin, Ruin Nation, Red Star 73, Mass Prod, Active Distro, Anti-Koerper Export, Steph Deviance, Abracadaboum, 2014)

Axis Of, 'The Universal Haymarket Affair,' *The Echo Conspiracy*, (DIY, 2008)

Black Rag, *Anarchy in the EU*, (President Saddam Hussein Records, 2004). Name of album, also the As in Black and Rag are circled, and the front cover is the EU circle of stars with a circled-A in the middle.

Die Wrecked, *Mongrel Hordes*, (Die Rex, Mass Prod, 2014). Passage on inside cover quotes Lucy Parsons.

Drongos For Europe, 'Freedom,' *Cage The Rage*, (DFE, 2010)

Global Parasite, *Memento Mori*, (Righteous Anger, Angry Scenes, Pumpkin, 2010). Back cover reads: 'Fuck National Government [with burning UK flag], Fuck European Government [with burning EU flag], Fuck Global Government [with burning NATO flag], Fuck All Government [with raised black flag].'

Icons of Filth, *Not On Her Majesty's Service*, (Mortarhate, 1982). Cover features circled-A in black star.

Lardarse, *live tape*, (Fluff, 1996). Cover features several circled-As, some in a black flag, some as bombs, some with male/female crosses and arrows.

Last Under The Sun, 'Fuck the Government,' *All Empires Crumble*, (Iron Man, 2004)

Lost Cherrees, *Hung Drawn and Quartered*, (Anti Society, 2012). Lost Cherees Logo arranged to look like circled-A.

Oi Polloi, *Ar Ceòl, Ar Cànan, Ar-A-Mach*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2006). 'A' in *Ar-A-Mach* is circled. Logo on backcover features a circled-A, circled-E and CND/peace logo, and large circled-A (celtic style) on the disc.

Oi Polloi, *Dùisg*, (Active Rebellion, 2012). Circled-A on back cover.

The Cunts, split with the Lobotomies, 'Freedom,' (Keep 'er Lit, EHC, Punk Shit, 2006)

The Lobotomies, split with the Cunts, 'No Vote Here,' (Keep 'er Lit, EHC, Punk Shit, 2006)

This System Kills, 'Autonomy,' split with Viktims, *Victims of this System*, (Mass Prod, Blind Destruction, 2006)

Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011). Circled-A on back cover. Images on cover of black bloc protestors. Inside cover has circled-A and circled-E. Essay on inside cover reads: 'They say "we're all in this together," but we don't think so. They have endless ways to get us taking sides with power, authority and capitalism; arguing for more control, directing our anger at who they tell us to, fighting their wars… Their latest big trick is the "crisis," a stroke of genius to further attacks on our class while forcing us to work harder for less, scramble over each other for soul destroying jobs, struggle to keep heads above water and accept the bad times to uphold the very system which enslaved us in the first place. Most of us are kept so busy and distracted with work, consumerism and celebrity culture that we either don't notice or have no strength or will to resist the war being waged against us. But more and more people now realise the lying politicians, greedy bankers and violent cops who protect them are our common enemies and there are those of us who fight back. From widespread popular uprisings against dictators and anti capitalist direct

action to work or voting refusal and countless everyday acts of resistance, struggles for freedom and autonomy are growing everywhere. As confrontations with authority and the class war escalate, it's time to step outside our comfort zones, over the line and beyond what they tell us is acceptable or possible. When you come up against the law you know you're heading in the right direction. The ruling elites will do anything to have it their way and will unleash all the forces of repression against us. Solidarity is our best defence and solidarity means attack. Aim high. For system collapse and for total liberation.' 'Links for action' include: Bristol Anarchist Bookfair, CrimethInc., Earth First, LibCom, Schnews, Squat.net, UK Uncut. etc. Songs: anti-work content in 'Work'; anti-election content in 'Choose to refuse'; protestor worship in 'Freedom fighters.' Lots of imagery of black flags, protestors, bashed cops etc.

Various, *And You Call This Civilization* compilation (Pumpkin, **Anarchistic Undertones**, 2010)

Various, *Angry Scenes vol. 5* compilation, (Angry Scenes, 2011). Cover with bands' logos has Ram-Man with both As circled.

Various, Class War compilation tape, *Inside for Us, Outside for Them*, 'For Class War prisoners,' (Filthy Tapes, c. ?). Contact addresses for Sheffield ABC and International ABC in Huddersfield. Quote inside says 'Marxism produces a regime indistinguishable from Fascism.'

Various, *One Law For Them, Another One For Us*, compilation benefit for The Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign, (Joe Black, 2001)

Various, *The Now or Never Sound Endeavour*, **benefit for Norwich Anarchists**, (c. 2008)

b.) Poland

Alians, Pełnia, (Pasażer, 2003). Black and Red logo.

Fever – Biała Gorączka, *Spokój*, (Pasażer, 2003). Anarchist imagery in booklet.

Meinhof, 'Hanging Around in an Anarchist Circle,' *8 Drops of Blood*. (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2010)

PESD, 'Kto To Jest?' [What's that?], *Politikårepoizonëkurvæ*, (Trująca Fala, 2006). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'I see statesmen & hear what they say. Don't think you motherfuckers I don't comprehend. You cheat even yourselves, 'cause authority is a swindle. Your whoredom is surpassing me.'

Post-Regiment, *S/T*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2000 [1992]). Circled-A on back cover.

Sanctus Iuda, 'Direct Action,' *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995). Anarchist imagery.

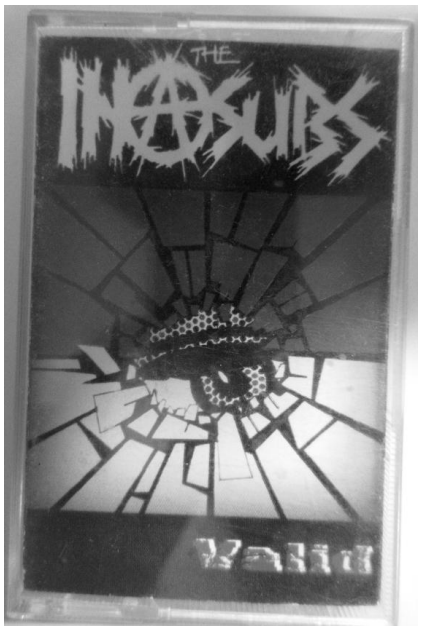
The Fight, 'Lost,' *Maldicion*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2009). Lyrics: 'If anarchists rule the world, then it means we have fuckin lost.' Explainer: 'The beautiful ideas of anarchy are constantly being messed up by a bunch of assholes, who dare to dictate how anarchism should look like … Today's anarchism is just a monolith, that cannot stand criticism, discussions nor different points of view … Freedom means that we accept and respect other points of views. And that we are brave to define our own anarchist way of seeing things, not necessarily matching with the anarchistic classics or leaders offer us.'

Various, *Muzyka Z Barykad* [*Music From the Barricades*] compilation, (Irokez, c. 2004). **Benefit for Federacja Anarchistyczna.**

Mural with names of dozens of anarchists and celebrated anarchist events at Rozbrat, Poznań.

c.) Indonesia

Inasubs – circled-A logo and Lesson Oi Records logo.



KontraSosial, 'Against the State,' *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009)

Krass Kepala, split with Die Wrecked, *Solidaritas Internasional*, (Die Rex, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Circled-A/circled-E imagery on cover.

Krass Kepala, *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015). Anarchist imagery on cover – circled-A in logo, circled-A in image backdrop.

Street Voices, 'Difficult Freedom, Anarchy Not For Sale,' *Kill Me With Your Lips*, (Movement Records, 2010). Lyrics: 'No fucking

oppressors, let us fucking free. We are not victim of suppressions invasion. Fuck authority likes fucking government.' Explainer [translated from Indonesian]: 'The ruling regime, political and economic systems, as well as the state apparatus – a frightening spectre.' Turtles Jr, 'Smash the State,' *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Lyrics: 'State is fuckin slavery. Create system greed. Freedom is our routs against them.'

Appendix 5 – Anti-fascist Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK

Active Minds, 'England Doesn't Belong To You,' *Turn Back the Tide of Bigotry*, (Active Distro, 2012)

Burnt Cross, 'We the People,' *Protest Punk*, (Tadpole, Loud Punk, Rusty Knife, Active Rebellion, Lukket Avdeling, Hohnie, Arripurri, Opiate, A world we never made, Pumpkin, Prejudice Me, 2013)

Defcon Zero, *Music For Gluesniffers, Terrorists & the Mentally Ill*, (Pumpkin, 2011), 'Nick Griffin' lyrics: 'Stick the BNP up your arse. Nick Griffin you cunt.' 'The offspring of Thatcher and Hitler is a prick.' 'St. Pauli anti-Nazi' lyrics: 'We ain't no fascist fashionistas, no nazi pricks.' 'Kicking nazi arse.'

Die Wrecked, 'Get Off the Fence,' *Mongrel Hordes*, (Die Rex, Mass Prod, 2014)

Dogs Abuse, 'Nazi No Brains,' *Distempered*, (DIY, c. 2008)

Doom, *Rush Hour of the Gods*, (Flat Earth, Active Distro, 1996). Inlay features the 'person putting swastika in the bin' logo (and one with the celtic cross too) with the words 'trash breeds trash' surrounding it.

Fetus Christ, 'Clarkson is a Nazi Prick,' *First Four Years*, (DIY, c. 2013)

From the Cradle to the Rave, 'Riot Shields,' *A Nightmare on Wall Street*, (Pumpkin, Riot Step, Riot Ska, Anti Manifesto, 2010)

Hard To Swallow/Underclass split, *Praise God and Pass the Ammunition*, (Days of Fury, 1996). Cover image features Spanish Civil War poster of priest with swastika chain around his neck.

Inner Terrestrials, 'White Nightmare,' *IT!*, (Mass Prod, General Strike, Active Distro, 1997)

Knucklehead, *Live 16/8/94*, (DS4A, 1994). Benefit for Anti-Fascist Action.

Oi Polloi, 'Nazi Scum,' *In Defence of Our Earth*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1995 [1990])

Oi Polloi, *Ar Ceòl, Ar Cànan, Ar-A-Mach*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2006). Provides link to www.antifa.org and gives Oi Polloi's contact address as 'c/o Anti-Fascist Action' in Edinburgh.

State of Filth, 'Dead Nazis,' *Forced Into Silence*, (DIY, 1996)

Rejected, 'White Poison,' *S/T*, (Mass Prod, 2009)

Various, *Angry Scenes vol. 5* compilation, (Angry Scenes, 2011). Reads 'Smash Fascism' on the back cover and disc.

b.) Poland

Delicje, *S/T*, (**No Pasaran** Records, 2011)

Homomilitia, *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Nikt Nic Nie Wie catalogue sheet (summer 1996) has picture of anti-Nazi t-shirt beside Homomilitia LP.

Sanctus Iuda, *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995). Anti-fascist imagery.

c.) Indonesia

Krass Kepala, 'Smash Fascism,' split with Die Wrecked, *Solidaritas Internasional*, (Die Rex, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Lyrics: 'Strike the fascist everywhere they rise. Smash the racist anywhere they grow. Strike the fascist. Smash the racist. No more tolerate, no more compromise.'

RKA, 'Fasis Keparat' ['Fascist Bastard'], *Maenkan Mainmu Kumainkan Mainku*, (Undercrust, Bukan, c. 2015)

Various, *Riot Connection* compilation, (Warrior Records, Riot Connection Records, 2010). Anti-fascist imagery in 'Skinhead Indonesia' centrefold.

Appendix 6 – Vegan, Animal Liberation and Food Sovereignty Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK

Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008). Animal liberation content such as 'Born Free' anti-hunting song, and 'V' song about veganism.

AntiSect, *Hallo there… How's Life?*, (Graven Image, 1991). Front cover has a baby and a badger both with their eyes gouged out. The back reads: 'There are some humans who do not possess those abilities which supposedly distinguish us from non-human animals.' Live album recorded in 1984, including the song 'Tortured and abused.'

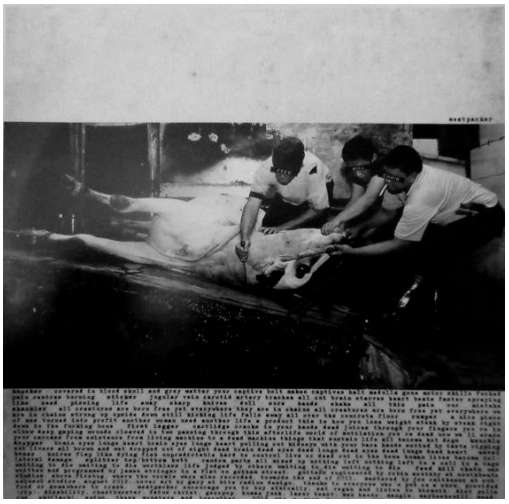
Black Rag, 'No Vivisection,' *Anarchy in the EU*, (President Saddam Hussein Records, 2004)

Grand Collapse, 'The Starting Bell,' *Far From the Callous Crowd*, (1859 Records, 2014). Anti-Grand National horse race. 'Far From the Callous Crowd' lyrics: 'Far away from the callous crowd in setts and dens the weak distress. Huddled underneath the soil, so confused and so perplexed… I sat in the back of the wagon that day, between the lab and the station gates. I'd never seen or met her before. She couldn't care less about their numbers or rank. Half their size, but completely unfazed, she laughed in their faces. Whilst awestruck I noticed, right below the pin badge that affirmed "food not bombs," the "NO BORDERS" patches that were sewn into her hood.'

Meatpacker, split with Mangle, (MeatMangler, Samizdat, 2011). Meatpacker side has *lots* of animal liberation content, and inlay reads: 'Meatpacker recommends that you eat vegan, buy ethically…' Lyrics to 'Graves of Lust': 'Lives cut short here, they lie flesh ripped from endless bones. Past your lips down your throat. Laid to rest, graves of lust.'

Disc of Meatpacker's side of split with Death Tripper.

Meatpacker, split with Death Tripper, (Pie n Mosh, Samizdat, 2012). Each song on Meatpacker side is a job in the abattoir process: 'Knocker, Sticker, Shackler, Rumper, First legger, Knuckle Dragger, Navel Boner, Splitter top/Bottom Butt.' Image inside is from inside an abattoir of a cow about to be killed by three people.



Oi Polloi, *Fuaim Catha*, (Mass Prod, 1999), 'The Earth is Our Mother,' lyrics: 'What is man without the other animals? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to beasts, soon happens to man – all things are connected.' 'Fuck Everyone Who Voted Tory,' lyrics: 'Right-wing, Christian, merchant banker, Dirty scab, fox-hunting wanker.'

Oi Polloi, 'Scrudadh 2323' ['Experiment 2323'], *Ar Ceòl, Ar Cànan, Ar-A-Mach*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2006). Anti-vivisection song. Anti-vivisection imagery. Links to several anti-vivisection organisations.

The Flue Sniffers, *A Species Elite?* (DiveyBombLegs, 2011)

The Planeteers, 'Cuntryside Alliance,' four-way split with The Try Hards, Eastfield, and Mutley, (GFN, 2006)

Various, *Angry Scenes volume 4* compilation, (Angry Scenes, 2008). Back cover reads: 'A portion of the proceeds from this CD will go to St Mary's Hospice and the Humane Research Trust – R.I.P. Trogg.'

Various, *Prisoners of War,* benefit compilation for JJ, an activist imprisoned for activities against Huntington Life Sciences with SHAC. (POW, 2011). Circled-A on cover, with black and red flag background. Anarchist black cross logo on disc. Cops with swastika on their helmets on the cover.

Various, *Hardcore Vs. Hunting* compilation, (Muppet Vision, c. 2005)

Voorhees, 'Let the Hunt Begin,' *Spilling Blood Without Reason*, (Armed With Anger, 1994)

b.) Poland

Infekcja, 'Padlina I Ścierwo!' ['Carrion and Carcass'], *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Dirty meat on your store shelves. Stinking carcass in your fridges. Corpses lying on your plates. Isn't it smelly? Doesn't it disgust you… Contaminated meat, eaten tastefully. Antibiotics, steroids – zoonotic diseases! Meat is murder! Meat is murder! Carrion and carcass! Meat is murder! Minced udders tongues, hooves. A liver and kidneys, guts, genitals. Sophisticated taste? – Carrion and carcass!'

Vegan Festival advertised at Rozbrat, Poznań.

Sanctus Iuda, 'McMurder,' *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995)

The Fight, 'Can't look at your plate,' *Maldicion*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2009). Lyrics: 'Can't look, can't look! Can't look at your plate! My dearest wife here come a romantic dinner. To celebrate my love I serve you this baked duck … My dearest son here comes the soup for you, boiled on a piece of meat. Just a little piece of meat. My soup won't be a cemetery. My plate won't be a coffin and you will not get with dead bodies to my heart.' Explainer: 'Everyone in the Fight is vegan already since a few years. If you have questions about it or you want to share a nice recipe feel welcomed!'

c.) Indonesia

Krass Kepala, 'Hurt The Earth,' *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015). Lyrics: 'Kill animal. Put a disease on your plate. # Stop Earth exploitation. Stop killing Animal.'

Zudas Krust, 'Stop Torturing,' *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011). Lyrics: 'For human consumption, an animal died. For human knowledge, an animal died. For human entertainment, an animal died. For human health, an animal suffered.' [They also cover Krass Kepala 'Hurt the Earth.']

Appendix 7 – Feminist Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK

Crass, 'Women,' *The Feeding of the 5000*, (Crass Records, 1978)

Not Right, 'Intersectionality Song' and 'My Body,' *Punk Is Not*, (DIY, 2012). Image of feminist protest on the cover.

Nu Pogodi, *Fuck My Womb, ...I'm Calling In Dead*, split with Choose Your Poison, 'Fuck My Womb,' (Active Rebellion, Pumpkin, 2013)

b.) Poland

Delicje, 'Kobieta Wykorzystywana' ['Used Woman'], *S/T*, (No Pasaran Records, 2011)

Fever – Biała Gorączka, 'Mechaniczne karmienie (cz 1)' ['Mechanical Feeding part 1'], *Spokój*, (Pasażer, 2003). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Are we born as a woman or man, whether we are becoming them. Everyone has an important role to play which is assigned by patterns, standards and rules … This culture deforms our personalities. Gender war is still on.'

Homomilitia, *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór* [*Your body, your choice*], (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Feminist themes on back cover image (prostitution, gynaecology, etc.).

Homomilitia, 'Moje Ciało - Mój Wybór' ['My Body, My Choice'], *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'This is my body, choice belongs to me. Noone cannot decide for me. Guards of morality who haven't got their own once, Want to reduce my right to decision.'

Homomilitia, 'Dyskryminacja' ['Discrimination'] , *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Fat pig is coming back home. By the way he's drinking beer in bar. Tired woman is spreading her legs, For male to get satisfied. Stop! Stop!... Woman reduced to the machine role, Is becoming apathetic and hasn't got power. She's afraid to show her own point of view. Grown up to be a house-wife.'

Infekcja, 'Inkubatory' ['Incubators'], *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Female bodies – incubators. Female bodies – "a cover for foetuses". Is it a gloomy joke? No! There are

politicians' dirty hands, Which fuck with your pregnancy … You are a second-class citizen … cooking, church, children, there are your duties … JP2 generation Dictates the rules today. Abortion doesn't come into play. "It's a mortal sin".'

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'Dual Estimation Symmetry,' split with Tunguska (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006). Lyrics: 'When a guy scores chicks – he's great macho. When a chick scores guys – she's a fuckin' slut. Dual Estimation Symmetry. When a woman exposes her sexuality – she's conscious and liberated. When a man exposes his sexuality – he's a sexist pig. Dual Estimation Symmetry. Patriarchy and political correctness – the same paranoia mechanism.'

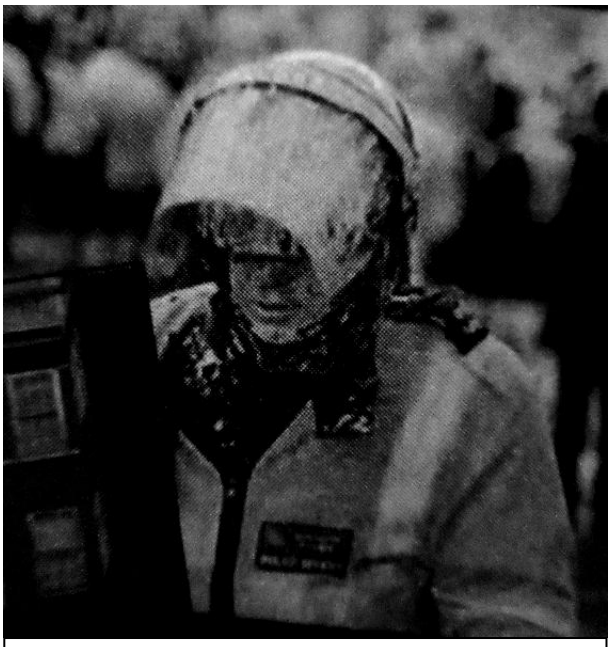
The Fight, 'New Woman,' *Maldicion*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2009). Lyrics: 'Can't find myself in those sick dichotomies. Holy Mary or hot bitch. Holy Mary or hot bitch!'

c.) Indonesia

GunXRose, 'Pro Wanita Ninja Lokal' ['Pro Women Local Ninja'], *Anti Dogmanisasi Berhala*, (Teriak, Doombringer Records, Battleground Records, Chey Clothing, Alternaive Distribution, Terkubur Hidup Records, Don't Talk Records, Pastimati, 2012)

Appendix 8 – Anti-police Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK



Detail from Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011).

Autonomads, 'G.M.P.' *No Mans Land*, (Mass Prod, Ruin Nation, Pumpkin, 2009). [GMP = Greater Manchester Police].

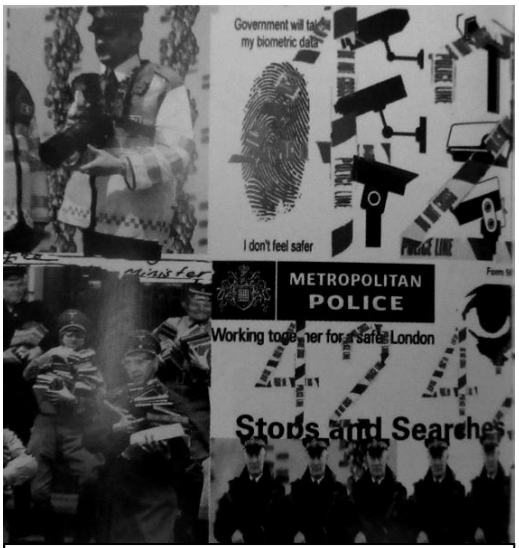
Autonomads/Black Star Dub Collective split, *From Rusholme with Dub*, (Abracadaboum, Active Distro, Antikörper Export, General Strike, Maloka, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, Rodent Popsicle, TNS, 2011). Image of a burning police car on the disc, and back cover image features graffiti saying 'Love Rusholme. Hate the Pigs. A.C.A.B.'

Autonomads, 'Coppers in the Dance,' *One Day All This Will Be Gone*, (Pumpkin, Ruin Nation, Red Star 73, Mass Prod, Active Distro, Anti-Koerper Export, Steph Deviance, Abracadaboum, 2014). And 'See You at the JCP' which has the chorus 'ACAB, see you at the JCP [Job Centre Plus].'

Black Cop, *S/T*, (DIY, c. 2013). Lyric sheet reads: 'Smoke some weed. Hate the police.'

Eastfield, 'Port Talbot Transport Police,' *Roverbrain*, (Ruptured Ambitions, 2002)

Fetus Christ, 'Bastard Cop,' *First Four Years*, (DIY, c. 2013)



Detail from Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008).

Grand Collapse, 'Turbid Milieu,' *Far From the Callous Crowd*, (1859 Records, 2014)

Mr Nipples and the Dangleberries, 'Bollox to the RUC,' *A Riot Down the Lane* DVD, (DIY, 2006)

Officer Down's band name, also the songs 'Officer Down!' and 'Beat Cop Blues' on *Led by Lies, Christians and Money*, (EHC, 2006)

Oi Polloi, 'Anti-Police Aggro,' *Fuaim Catha*, (Mass Prod, 1999)

Sawn Off split w/ Health Hazard, (Smack in the Mouth, 1997). Lyrics booklet features cartoon of police using anti-police protestors as targets at firing range, including one with circled-A placard.

Subhumans, 'Til the Pigs Come Round,' *The Day The Country Died*, (Bluurg, 1982)

The Cunts, 'Police Brutality,' *Middleground volume 2*, (Punk Shit, 2005)

The Lobotomies, 'Cop Out,' *Big Bang Hangover*, (EHC, 2009)

Various, *Justice for the Ian Tomlinson Family*, benefit CD by Norfolk Community Action Group (c. 2009). Songs include The Oppressed, 'ACAB.'

Various, *Bastards In Blue* compilation by Now Or Never! (c. 2012). Songs include Cockney Rejects 'Police Car,' Angelic Upstarts 'Murder of Liddle Towers,' The Partisans 'Police Story,' DIRT 'Plastic Bullets,' The Oi! Scouts 'Police Harassment.'

b.) Poland

Homomilitia, 'Policja' ['Police'], *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Police – support fascists. Police – fascist pigs. Bribery, contracts, connections with mafia. Beating and punishment, they cannot do anything else.'

Infekcja, *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011). Anti-police imagery in booklet.

Stracony, *Uważajcie – Bomby Wiszą Nad Waszymi Głowami*, (Tribal War, 1999). Images of police violence in lyric booklet.

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'Tribute to all anti-cop punk anthems,' split with Tunguska, (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006)

c.) Indonesia

Inasubs, 'Valid,' *Valid*, (Lesson Oi, Movement, 2007 [1999]). Lyrics: 'Police force still oppressed us.'

Inasubs, 'Street Army,' *Valid*, (Lesson Oi, Movement, 2007 [1999]). Lyrics: 'Police and the people, to believe we like the scum.'

Krass Kepala, 'Awas Polisi' ['Police Alert'], *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015)

Krass Kepala, 'Police Violence,' *10 Years Of Madness*, (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015)

Milisi Kecoa, 'Police Brutality (the Clown),' split with Hårda Tider, (Kecoa Marah Records, Doombringer Records, Delusion Of Terror Records, Alternaive Distribution, Suhatkor Records, Epidemic Records, 2011). Lyrics: 'Make money with some arrests on reasons that make no senses. You never care about human right, just beat up till we confess. Police brutality … Make all people guilty, keep your own credibility. If we rich we're free to go, if you poor you die in jail.' [Cover of old Bandung band called The Clown (formed 1995)]

Turtles Jr, *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Cover image of 'pig' violently apprehending punk.

Turtles Jr, 'A.C.A.B.' *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Lyrics: 'Fuck you. I hate you. I hope you die. All cops are bastard. A.C.A.B.'

Turtles Jr, 'Police F.O,' *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Lyrics: 'Police fuck off. Fight police brutality and burn it like dust.'

Turtles Jr, 'No Police No Pollution,' *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Lyrics: 'No rules no probiden [*sic*], moving free legal and free. No police no pollution, smoke weed and drink alcohol. Moving free legal and free.'

Turtles Jr, 'My Country Is Over,' *Murder*, (Kuyangora Rrecords, 2013). Lyrics: 'Fight the government, kick the police.'

Appendix 9 – DIY (as a theme/trope) in Lyrics and Imagery in Punk Records

a.) UK

Defcon Zero, *Music For Gluesniffers, Terrorists & the Mentally Ill*, (Pumpkin, 2011). Back cover reads: 'Piracy is ace! Copy, redistribute, drink rum.'

Eradicate, *Punks Still Not Dead*, (DIY, 1997). Lyrics inlay reads: 'DIY. The only way!!'

Global Parasite, *Memento Mori*, (Righteous Anger, Angry Scenes, Pumpkin, 2010). Reads on the back cover: 'Feel free to make copies for your mates, all we ask is that you copy the lyrics too and don't do it for money! Oh and if you see this anywhere for more than a tenna: steal it or you can get it from the band or labels for a fiver or less! Support D.I.Y. music and fuck the greedy bastards!' But *does* say: 'All rights reserved. 2010 ©'

Political Asylum, *Window on the World*, (Boss Tunage Retro, 2012 [reissue]). Inlay history reads: 'DIY is a huge misnomer. It's an acronym for Do It Yourself. What it actually meant in practice is/was Do It With Others, together, collectively. While commercially, punk wasn't as big as it was in the late 70s/early 80s, there remained a vibrant, underground 'scene' of independent record labels, cassette labels, folks organising concerts, fanzines…and to a large extent, this played a part in the political (ie left-wing and anarchist) ferment of the times. So, as a band, we carried on playing anywhere and everywhere, typically benefits for various anarchist, animal rights, and other activists causes/struggles, and released a couple of records, via friends/comrades.' [by Ramsay Kanaan]

Spanner, *Crisis*, (Active Distro, Pumpkin, Maloka, Mass Prod, 2011). Back cover reads: 'Music for social change – not profit.' Has mangled barcode with stick figures escaping. Characters beneath read: 'Escape Captivity.'

Various, *Bare Faced Hypocrisy Sells Records. The anti-Chumbawamba E.P.*, (Propa Git, 1998)

b.) Poland

Meinhof, 'Ghetto Punk,' *8 Drops of Blood*, (Nikt Nice Nie Wie, 2010). Lyrics: 'Do the shit yourself, it's not the music business. Spirit that can't be sold. If not you … then who's gonna keep the dreams alive?'

Sanctus Iuda, 'Do It Yourself,' *Rząd - Korporacje - Wy/Zysk*, (Demonstracja Tapes & Distro, 1995). And DIY imagery.

The Fight, 'Call It D.I.Y.' *Maldicion*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2009). Lyrics: 'You call it d.i.y. and I call it crap, Next empty word, nothing's behind that. You call it d.i.y. and I call it shit. Another empty word, nothing stands behind it. Competition! Punk rock stars! Mainstream tactics! Gossip and lies!' Explainer: 'We all wipe our mouths and asses with this magic word. Everything we do is D.I.Y. and we act like we discovered it only recently, forgetting that people have always acted this way. The D.I.Y. scene is the opposite of the mainstream. But we oppose the mainstream only in the machinery of making music … And yes, it's beautiful that we can try some other ways to work those things out. But that's about it with the differences 'cause at the same time we still copy some mainstream behaviours.'

c.) Indonesia

GunXRose, 'Smash Sponsor Shit Show,' *Anti Dogmanisasi Berhala*, (Teriak, Doombringer Records, Battleground Records, Chey Clothing, Alternaive Distribution, Terkubur Hidup Records, Don't Talk Records, Pastimati, 2012).

KontraSosial, 'Bikin Sendiri Jangan Beli' ['Make Yourself Do Not Buy'], *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009). Lyrics [translated from Indonesian]: 'Organised resistance. Disable the corporation. Freed from addiction. Shopping to death. Make their own do not buy. Do It Yourself or die.' Explainer [translated from Indonesian]: 'DIY is one way to minimalise our dependence to global capitalism. DIY or DIE is not a fascist slogan.'

KontraSosial, 'Death to Capitalist Punk,' split with Warstruck, (Black Seeds Records, c. 2009). Lyrics: 'Shove studs up your arse. For a horrendous reason, That you can't resist, You sport the circle A For fucking dollars. Shove spikes up your arse. If this punk rock, I'd rather be a jock.'

Krass Kepala, 'Destroy Competition,' split with Die Wrecked, *Solidaritas Internasional*, (Die Rex, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Lyrics: 'Fuck competition, smash competition. Burn competition, destroy competition. We hate competition, and we … don't need competition.'

Movement records 'DIY label,' info in Total Destroy, *Biar Mampus*, (Movement Records, 2009), and on Street Voices, *Kill Me With Your Lips*, (Movement Records, 2010).

The Plagiator, 'd.i.y.' *Total Fuckin' Pogo vol. 1* compilation, (Stay Punk Records, 2005)

Appendix 10 – Anti-religious Imagery and Lyrics in Punk Records

a.) UK

1000 Drunken Nights, 'Let Us Prey,' *Blank Cheque for Peace?* (Carbomb records, 2009). Lyrics: 'From America's Midwest to throughout the Middle East, religious leaders prey. Fundamentalist doctrine with the premise of salvation, militant beliefs through theological perversion. Let us prey, prey upon the weak. Bomb and control their city streets. Own their hearts, destroy their minds, divinity of the killing kind. Fundamentalism is thrivin' all across the globe, promising land and bread and offering state hope. Bullshit prophets mobilise their rhetoric of fear, instigating more global division, another war is near.'

AK47s, 'God's Man (on acid),' *Population Against Corporation. The Front Cover Archives* compilation (benefit for the Shell To Sea campaign), (Front Cover Productions, 2008)

Constant State of Terror, 'Not In My Name,' *S/T* demo, (DIY, 2006). Lyrics: 'This holy war, to settle scores.'

Death Mold, 'In God You Rust,' on the *And You Call This Civilization?* compilation, (Pumpkin, Anarchistic Undertones, 2010)

Die Wrecked, 'Anti-Theist Anthem,' *Solidaritas Internasional* split with Krass Kepala, (Die Rex, Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Lyrics: 'It's not for us, it's made for them. How they condone, how they condemn. So if there were a god up there, war on heaven we'd declare. The promise of an afterlife, as recompense for toil and strife. Religion is a curse on freedom. Fuck their shackles, we don't need them. The moral laws they conjure up, in self-interest – just so corrupt. Noble myths of mystic fog, it's just the oil for human cogs, to keep the social machine running free from any spanners in the works. And we're the worst. They patronise the 'mindless masses,' to help preserve the powered classes.' 'Indoctrination to the flock. You're taught to kneel before you walk. Questions and free-thought forbidden, "trust the law that is god-given," "have blind faith, just keep believing." In whichever god they tell you to. Who's fooling you?' 'So much shit to have to swallow, these idiots we're made to follow. This doctrine stinks, it's not making sense, despite the clouds of sweet incense. Question with your own brain the authority they're wielding over us. Now you're conscious.'

Doom, 'Thanatophobia,' *Rush Hour of the Gods*, (Flat Earth, 1996). Lyrics: 'Christian fools just live in fear, afraid of death their time draws near. Heaven's an invention designed to ease their tension.' 'Islam's like fascism. Power through fear. Oppression. Force fed the word of Allah. Hatred breeds

through khilafa.' Explanatory note reads: 'Religion thrives on fear & control.' Title of the record is about a massive increase in religious sects in Japan in the early-to-mid-1990s.

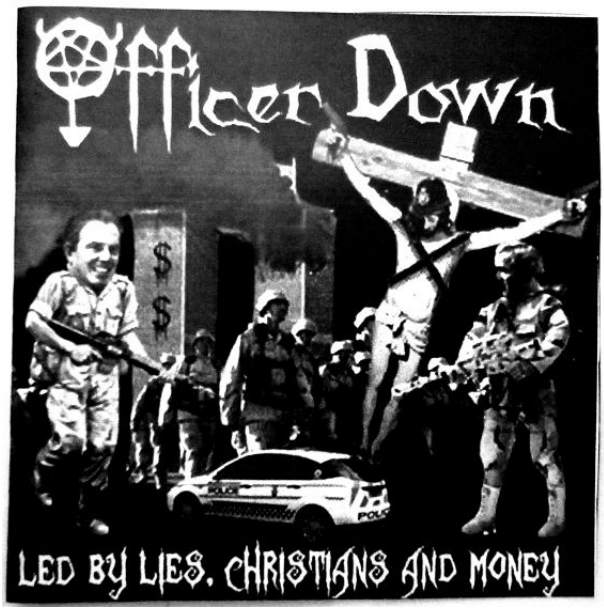
Fetus Christ, 'God Reigns in Blood,' 'Paedo Priest,' 'Freedumb Church,' and 'Godfucker,' *The First Four Years*, (DIY, 2013)

Fire Exit, 'Burn the Churches,' on the *It's a Cancerous Society* compilation (benefit for Ayrshire hospice), (PFB records, c. 2008)

From the Cradle to the Rave, 'On the Origin of Species,' *A Nightmare on Wall Street*, (Pumpkin, Riot Step, Riot Ska, Anti Manifesto, 2010). Lyrics: 'You rebrand your religion as fact and sell it to the masses, bringing ignorance back!' 'But with your backwards thinking and indoctrination, you try to create a religious nation. Suppression of science, enforcing a theocracy.'

From the Cradle to the Rave, *The Seven Deadly Singles EP*, (Riot Step, Pumpkin, 12 12 records, Riot Ska, Anti Manifesto, 2012). CD inlay reads: 'Humans don't need religion to tell us what is right from wrong, and although the subject of morality has so far been left untouched in the realm of religious scripture, in the age of truly global politics we need to converge on a universal set of ethics which allow freedom of expression and choice for all, shedding the ties to religious law to promote human wellbeing.'

Lantern For A Gale, 'Interpreting Nothing,' *Land's More Hostile*, (Savour Your Scene, 2012)



Officer Down, 'Man of the Cloth,' *Led by Lies, Christians and Money*, (EHC, c. 2006). Cover image features a crucified Jesus wearing a police helmet on his head and bullet belts across his chest. The back cover features an inverted cross and pentagram.

Oi Polloi, 'Religious Con,' *Fuaim Catha*, (Mass Prod, 1999). Lyrics: 'Church and state – lies and hate. Religious con goes on and on.' 'Give to the church with its wealth piled high, while outside the starving millions die. And then they bless you as you're marched off to war, to die for the rich in the struggle for more.' 'This bigoted crap is fuckin absurd, I'll take a shit on your holy word.'

Pink Turds in Space, 'Christians,' *The Complete Pink Turds in Space*, (AntiSociety, 2010). Lyrics: 'If I had a say you'd be nailed to your cross, with your morals rammed up your hole.' 'This is rich man's law. Bomb and exploit – the will of God.'

Police Bastard, 'God Off,' on the *Angry Scenes Volume 5* compilation, (Angry Scenes, 2011)

Ratmonkey, 'No Religion,' split with Wasted Life, (MVFK, Dirty Old Man, Winston records, Punker Pages, 2009)

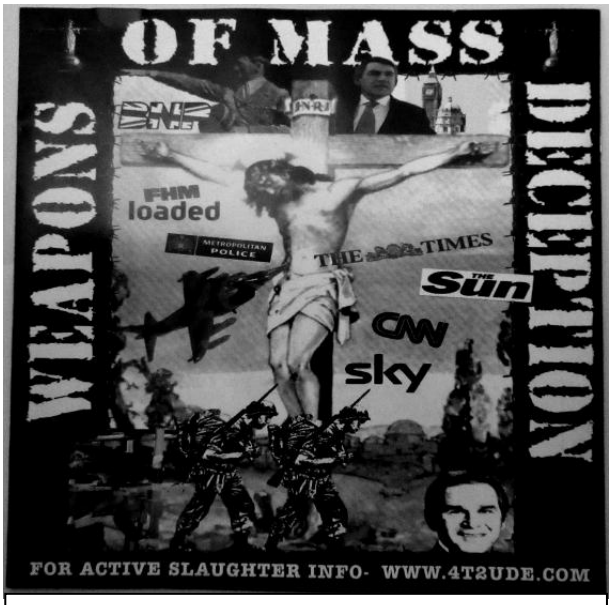
Rejected, 'Save Our Souls,' *S/T*, (Mass Prod, 2009). Lyrics: 'The religious life/faith. Keep the masses in line. To save your souls. WE HAVE NO SOULS.' 'To oppress or segregate. A feeling of superiority. But it's all a fantasy in your mind. There is no afterlife, there is no afterlife!'

Rudimentary Peni, '1/4 Dead,' 'Blissful Myth,' 'Blasphemy Squad,' and 'Army of Jesus,' *Death Church*, (Corpus Christi, 1983). Cover artwork has lots of anti-religious imagery including skeletal crucified Jesus etc.

The Fiend, 'Greed Power Religion War,' *Greed-Power-Religion-War*, (Heedcase records, 2014)

The Flue Sniffers, 'In the Name of God,' *A Species Elite?* (Diveybomblegs records, 2011). Lyrics: 'Violate your flock in every way. Your sickness knows no bounds. But the power of your faith will see you through. Suppress the weak and wrap them in your cloth of lies. Blood thirsty, deceptive men with the devil in your eyes. Show no remorse and feel no shame for the suffering you inflict. Shit on your cross of hatred, self righteous hypocrites.'

The Lobotomies, 'Holidays and Holy Wars,' *Drink, Pass Out, Repeat*, (EHC, Keep 'er Lit, 2007). Lyrics: 'I don't care what you believe, Mohammed, Buddha, Christ. Religious rule of society is a wholly criminal heist. Every day we're slapped with it, caged by the hand of God. The state bows down to praise the lord, our freedom's just a fraud. Pious pressure reigns down from on high, dictates the law of man. But where do you and I fit in with their godly master plan? Preaching lies to scores and scores of followers that they implore to close their minds up more and more. Holidays and



Detail from Active Slaughter, *4T2ude*, (Active Distro, 2008).

holy wars, that is all religion's for.'

The Restarts, 'Jihad,' *Slumworld*, (Active, 2002). Lyrics: 'New fuckers run this town got the Koran wrong way round. Their rise don't blame me logic defy middle east nazi. Your rights low on list torture abuse still exist. Circumcise female enemy stoned to death for infidelity. Your profanity versus tyranny. Denied to exist. Jihad death war fuck holy law fundamentalist. Religious doctrine hate incorporate with the state. Their laws forced on all though by men with brains so small. Protest they detest cut throat justice seen at best. Blaspheme your dead meat shoot you in the fuckin street.'

The Restarts, 'Intelligent Design,' *Outsider*, (No Label records, 2007). Lyrics: 'Immaculate conception and Adam and Eve, these are fables too large to believe.' 'Children aren't born into religion. It's imposing creed without question.' Inside cover of the CD reads: 'The debate over Intelligent Design being taught in Science classes is the thin end of the religious wedge, where theology is trying to override scientific fact. We need a secular society, where religions and ideologies can coexist without having any influence on government.'

Traumatism, 'Eat Christ,' *Disobey* compilation, (Unity recs, c. 1995)

State of Filth, 'Jesus Barmy Army,' *Forced into Silence*, (DIY, 1996). Lyrics: 'Like-minded zombies gather together. A slap in the face is a pat on the back. Numb in the belief that one must suffer in order to reach a spiritual other.'

Subhumans, 'No,' *The Day the Country Died*, (Bluurg, 1982) features a priest/reverend as part of the cover image. Lyrics: 'No I don't believe in Jesus Christ. My mother died of cancer when I was five. No I don't believe in religion, I was forced to go to church, I wasn't told why.'

Subhumans, *Religious Wars*, (Spiderleg, 1982). Cover has anti-religious imagery. Lyrics to 'Religious Wars': 'Do you believe in the afterlife? Termination with a rusty knife. Religious wars no reason why. What a glorious way to die. In the name of God they left you to die.' 'The ultimate excuse is here. Die for a cause, religion is fear. Fear of the threat of something unreal. Abdicate the way you really feel.'

Vomit Fall, 'Imaginary God,' *Disobey* compilation, (Unity recs, c. 1995)

Madonna and child (with glass of beer?), graffiti at Rozbrat, Poznań.

b.) Poland

Baraka Face Junta, 'Sygnet,' S/T, (Trująca Fala, Nikt Nice Nie Wie, 2010). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Hypocrisy of the evil man, a liar talks about the truth. The priest touches, the priest counts. Down on your knees, down on the ground … The golden ring on his fat finger.' Anti-religious imagery in booklet.

Infekcja, *S/T*, (Scream Records, Trująca Fala, Caramba, Drop Out Records, Zaraza Production, Chaos W Mojej Głowie, 2011). Anti-religious imagery in booklet.

Homomilitia, 'Zero Tolerancji' ['Intolerance'], *Twoje Ciało - Twój Wybór*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 1996). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Catholic pigs with their right views, Want to lead our lives. It's said those people are civilised, I can't believe this. Everyday damps my spirits.'

Post-Regiment, 'Religia,' *S/T*, (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, 2000 [1992]). Lyrics [translation provided in booklet]: 'Do you believe in this light … The lights messiahs submit to noble prostitution, unnecessary words … The truth is hatred – factory of lies. Do you believe in their light. Just then one of them tells you that love is fear. That's your light.'

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'My Name Is Gitwa, Bold & Beauty Gitwa,' split with Tunguska (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006). Lyrics: 'Christian Hardcore?, Krishna Hardcore? What a fuckin crap! Lost punk roots with lost balls … I don't care what you think, god fearing fuck!'

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'Babylon Won,' split with Tunguska (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006). Lyrics: 'Stupid fucks preaching about Jah, so show me his presence now. I'll puke on your lies and attempts at dominating the world.'

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'Show Must Go On in Rome,' split with Tunguska (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006). Lyrics: 'Choose another liar and let him forbid thinking free choice …

forbid real love and contraceptive. In the name of great non-existent let him legitimate the conservatism … Whose authority? Whose holy father? Whose moral teacher? for unanimous crowd in spectacular media circus.'

The Bold and the Beautiful, 'The Battle,' split with Tunguska (Trująca Fala, Sadness Of Noise, Teleports, 2006). Lyrics: 'Freedom arises with power to resist religious lies.'

Mural at Rozbrat, Poznań.

c.) Indonesia

Duct Tape Surgery, 'Fate,' *Facing Problems*, (Stop 'n' Go, Time Up Records, 2012). Lyrics: 'Listen to what they're saying. Religion. Tell me what to believe in. Point of no return. I've lived for no reason.'

KontraSosial, 'Religi Konsumsi' ['Religious Consumption'], *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009). Lyrics [translation from Indonesian]: 'Prophet ad victim, wearing a Nike brand turban, our ad victims, religious propaganda.' Explainer [translation from Indonesian]: 'Ladies and gents, we introduce to you the CONSUMERISM RELIGION!!! Shopping is worship that guarantees you get to heaven.'

KontraSosial, *Endless War*, (Final Warning, Kontra Kommunique Division, 2009). Anti-religious artwork: the disc itself is circled with the words 'No Gods x No Masters x No Slavery x No Oppressions x'; a Madonna and child with their faces replaced by skulls, a revolver in the Madonna's hand, and rows of missiles forming angel wings behind her.

Krass Kepala, 'Arogansi Agama' ['Religious Arrogance'], (live version), split with Die Wrecked, *Solidaritas Internasional*, (Die Rex, Pyrate Punx, Jobsworth, Mass Prod, Pumpkin, 2013). Originally released on the *7 Pesan Pendek* EP, again on *Total Destruction*, (Disarmament records, 2009), and most recently (both live and studio versions) on *10 Years Of Madness* (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015). Lyrics [translation from Indonesian]: 'stop religious arrogance that legalises violence against social activities.'

Krass Kepala, *10 Years Of Madness* (Imaginaire, Bandung Pyrate Punx, Rinderherz, 2015). Cover art parodies 'The Last Supper' painting with Jesus and the disciples replaces by skull-headed punx.

Zudas Krust, 'Percepat Kiamat!' ['Hasten the Apocaplypse'], *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009). Lyrics [translation supplied in booklet]: 'Wishing rewards from the idols [*sic*] tower, to be fast of the doomsday, God damn with heaven, if reward just shopping.'

Zudas Krust, *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009). Artwork features skulls in a mass grave, declaring a Nietzschean 'God is dead,' while also implicating religion in mass murder and genocide.

Zudas Krust, 'You Call It Moral,' *Here Lies Your Gods*, (Rauha Turva, Gusto Rana!, Disparodesire, 2009). Lyrics [translation supplied in booklet]: 'It's "in the name of God" written on your forehead. Slashing and bashing, your moral fuelled with hate.'

Zudas Krust, 'Perang Agama' ['Religious War'], *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011). Lyrics [translation supplied in booklet]: 'High dose of arrogance, killing and intimidating, establishing their heaven. Never care about how much blood they spill. Religion war in the name of God.'

Zudas Krust, 'God System Slavery,' *A Loyal Slave to the Apocalyptic Order*, (European release distributed by Rauha Turva, 2011). Lyrics [translation supplied in booklet: 'No good deeds goes unpunished. Religion … religion … religion … for so long!!!'